Walt Whitman's search for a healthy mental therapeutic.

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Thesis Summary

The study examines Whitman's engagement with mind-cure and mental science therapies between 1855 and 1872. Key poems in "Leaves of Grass", 1855 and 1856, are analysed to propose that Whitman reformulates elements of his Preface 1855 to construct a master-class format on positive thinking. The study argues that significant poems in 1856 utilise such an innovative, instructive mode, combining this with a critique of the populist phrenology of Fowler and Wells. The complexity of Whitman's engagement with *The American Phrenological Journal* is investigated. Whitman, it is claimed, identifies phrenologists and other purveyors of advice such as Weaver and Beecher as "manacled spirits", whose offering of succour through mental therapeutics is repressive, moralistic and rigidly didactic. By contrast he champions independent thinking in opposition to such advice, and uses the frontispiece of "Song of Myself" to critique a key didactic feature of the *American Phrenological Journal*, the "Phrenological Portrait". The study proposes that by 1860 Whitman took a more conflicted stance to the evolving mind-therapies and began to adopt, into his poetic, strands of mind-cure therapeutics related to the construction of "magnetic personality", and of abstract spiritual fulfilment. This conflicted stance surfaces in the reorganisation, post 1860, of "Song of Joys" and is carried on into *Democratic Vistas* . Overall the study argues for Whitman engaging purposefully and critically with mind-cure therapies so as to generate his own therapy of the mind, designed to raise his listeners' self-esteem, and their ability to think for themselves.

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With love and gratitude to all who have helped me on what has been a long path. To my parents for their love of learning and confidence in me. To Liz and all my family who have supported me at all times. To Judith for lightening the dark times. Special thanks to Wynn who showed such patience in helping me craft words so I could voice what I wanted to get out.

INTRODUCTION

Whitman's Search for a Healthy Therapeutic: The Need for a "Felt Connection"

The purpose of this study is to explore the opportunities that were made available to Whitman in his search for a poetic, which offered a therapeutic model to his readers, by the presence in popular culture of a range of texts described as "mind-cure" which claimed to raise the self-esteem of the reader.

I follow Donald Meyer in his acknowledgement of the importance of the term "mind-cure" to describe "popular psychologies aimed at health, wealth and peace of mind," and endorse the validity of his proposal for of the extension of his study to include "spiritualists and phrenologists ... long antedating Mrs Eddy and her late nineteenth century peers." Also I wish to demonstrate that engagement with "mind-cure" was of importance to Whitman. For him, confronting the consistent pedagogic impulse contained in each wave of popular psychology was to engage with:

> ....a distinguishable ideology entailing a distinguishable way of life. Emerging self-consciously from and against the old protestant tradition, particularly of New England mind-cure ... had a larger life than the life of its churches, ... and it registered tensions in its parent culture.[1]

In the concluding sections of his 'signature poem' "Song of Myself" Whitman provides an enthusiastic summation of the main themes of his lengthy and complex poem. Scholarship has addressed many of the issues involved in decoding these sections, containing what are, on Whitman's part, deliberately enigmatic clues as to the purpose and import of his poetic. The declaration of a stance taken involving contradiction,

Do I contradict myself?
Very well then I contradict myself
(I am large I contain multitudes.)[2]

has been analysed as a key insight into the complexity of the self Whitman is fleshing forth in the poem, the type of selfhood he is promulgating, (to use a favourite term of his). The dimensions within which this contradiction operates have been variously identified as political, as relating to sexual identity, and linked to philosophical issues, with the transient and eternal conjoined; in postmodern criticism, the emphasis has been on paradoxes embedded within language and the very act of writing.

The full import of the deliberately challenging "I sound my barbaric yawp" has been duly teased out; initially, to those hostile to what they saw as the poet's uncouth primitivism, it was merely read as confirmation of triumphalism from a philistine, while more recent scholarship has suggested that behind such a posture lies a knowing and cautious Whitman sensitive to his reception by contemporaries.

Both the concluding trope of spotted hawk and the magnificent image of the poet persona taking his departure at the end of the symbolic day have been pored over in order to clarify the metaphysical import of the stance being adopted.

The particular example of direct address to the reader in the very last section, 'If you want me ... you will hardly know me ... Keep encouraged,"[3] has yielded insight into Whitman's relation to his contemporary audience. If, however, the comprehensive overview of the critical reception of the poem contained in E Haviland Miller's *Leaves of Grass: A Mosaic of Interpretations*[4] is examined, an interesting pattern

emerges. Whilst Miller acknowledges the various insights briefly indicated above, and discusses the importance to a variety of critics of the relevant lines, there is a pair of lines in the poem which has not attracted significant, let alone sustained, critical attention.:

> But I shall be good health to you nevertheless,
> And filter and fibre your blood.[5]

It is the aim of this study to investigate the implications of these lines for our understanding of Whitman's enterprise as a whole and to explore their resonance. The twin parts of the medical trope in the second line are quite startling: Whitman is suggesting that he can operate in a relationship to his reader which is equivalent to that supplied today by a surrogate life-support system. If any bodily system needs filtering there is the suggestion that impurities must be removed. What is very strongly conveyed by the assertive alliteration of the two active verbs is that the outcome of the poet's intervention is not just passive, in the sense of involving remedial action designed to remove impurity, but is also assertive and life-enhancing. "Blood" can obviously refer initially to the body's network of channels for the flow of blood, so necessary for life. There is also available to Whitman the range of reference that flows from the common usage "life-blood." This can be used for any system or function of the self which is indispensable to the business of maintaining vital functions, mental as well as physical, and thus social well-being.

There is no shortage of suggestions as to which functions of the self Whitman's poetry addresses and re-vitalises. A whole range of critics have aided our

understanding of Whitman's urging of robust political individuality, his promotion of a healthy acceptance of one's sexuality and his insistence on the maintenance of a respectful and sensitive awareness of the whole natural world and all earth's citizens. I too wish to pursue this wider agenda which "life-blood" considerations invite but to do so by investigating the mind as a reservoir of thought power, which is the key trope of all mind-cure texts. The texts examined will all be primary ones, covering the years 1848 to 1865. The importance of Fowler and Wells' contribution to issues of the mind as promoted through *The American Phrenological Journal*[6] will be studied through examination of the discourse patterns revealed in the construction of an editorial voice. In addition the output of male advice-givers from within the Fowler and Wells stable will be measured, focusing on the work of Reverend G. S. Weaver. Primary source materials relating to Henry Ward Beecher will feature, including both his writings for young men and the transcription of his sermons by a devoted parishioner. There will be an examination of the key phrenological text in which and through which Fowler and other practising phrenologists recorded individual readings for subjects. One key visual component of *The American Phrenological Journal,* the 'Phrenological Portrait' will feature. Central terms relating to the power of the mind found in all these primary texts will be examined in the light of Webster's 1828 Dictionary.[7]

Through this emphasis on primary texts I wish to build on and hopefully extend the work of major critics who have identified Whitman's deep interest in his contemporaries' physical, spiritual and sometimes mental health.[8] Initially such a study will necessitate following up the insights of Harold Aspiz in his early ground-breaking study *Walt Whitman and the Body Beautiful*, and in his recent study *So*

Long.[9] Aspiz describes Whitman's therapeutic effect thus:

> Through the force of his will, the vigorous healer-hero, prodigal of his electric fluid, disseminates curative electricity to vitalize the sick and despairing: they absorb it, and are benefited.[10]

He is also one of the first critics to mine the treasure trove that is the Whitman notebook "Albot Wilson". He homes in on those sections of that notebook which he correctly describes as "trial lines" for "Song of Myself." A consideration of one such passage will assist in demonstrating how I plan to employ and extend his approach:

> Where is one abortive, mangy, cold
> Starved of masculine lustiness
> Without core and loose in the knees?
> Clutch fast to me, my ungrown brother,
> That I *infuse* you with grit and *jets of life*
> I am not to be scorned(?) : __ I Compel;
> It is quite indifferent to me who (you) are:
> I have stores plenty and to spare
> And of whatsoever I have I bestow upon you.
> And first I bestow my love.[11]

Aspiz glosses the passage as "the persona undertakes to recharge the weakened electric 'cores' of his fellow citizens with his own 'jets of life' – the jets of the subtle electric fluid."[12]

I wish to extend the analysis of such passages to a fuller consideration of the broad extent of Whitman's therapeutic project, bearing in mind other pieces from the same notebook which may fruitfully be examined as indicators of Whitman's intentions. One such is "I dilate you with tremendous breath, I buoy you up,[13]" and the following is another:

> These are the thoughts of all men in all ages and lands
> They are not original with me - they are mine - they are yours just the same
> If these thoughts are not for all they are nothing
> If they do not enclose everything they are nothing
> If they are not the school of all things physical, moral and mental they are nothing,[14]

By bearing such passages in mind it will become possible to identify a matrix of tropes which intersect and cumulatively insist on and constitute a therapeutic enterprise and it will be claimed that through these tropes runs an emphasis on mental nourishment.

The last line of the notebook extract Aspiz discusses is indicative of a Whitman announcing his devotion to the tuition of his readers: 'if they are not the school of all ....*mental*.' Whitman may at times sound like an autodictat in his insistence on driving home his offers of care and love. This line suggests, however, a much more sensitive and careful Whitman planning to find space in his poetic for detailed instruction to a reader concerning how to think. The issue being addressed is the potential of a poem if it were fashioned so as to be a school for all things mental, so as to demonstrate to the reader the reader how to think. That readers in America have been receptive to messages guiding them how to achieve forms of happiness through control of the mind is well documented. In explaining healthy-mindedness as a psychological concept which deals with evil, William James suggests a powerful role for the individual's thoughts in the case of the man who is "actively happy":

> It [evil] can so often be converted into a bracing and tonic good by a simple change of the sufferer's inner attitude ... since you make them [the facts that disconcert your peace] evil or good by your own thoughts about them, it is the ruling of your own thoughts which proves to be your principal concern.[15]

James is at pains to identify the importance of the mind-cure movement, "it has taken up into itself a number of contributory elements and it must now be reckoned with as a genuine religious power," and concerned to identify the elements he alludes to:

> One of the doctrinal sources of Mind-cure is the four Gospels; another is Emersonianism or new England transcendentalism; another is Berkeleyan idealism; another is spiritism, with its message of "law" and "progress" and "development"; another the optimistic popular science evolutionism ... and, finally Hinduism has contributed a strain. But the most characteristic feature of the mind-cure movement is an inspiration much more direct. The leaders in this faith have had an intuitive belief in the all-saving power of healthy-minded attitudes as such, in the conquering efficacy of courage, hope and trust ...Their belief has in a general way been corroborated by the *practical experiences* of their disciples; and this experience forms today a mass imposing in amount.[16] [emphasis added]

James is also insistent on one "plain fact" concerning the success of mind-cure; they speak to the "extremely practical turn of character of the American people... [by articulating] ...a systematic philosophy of life ... intimately knit up with *concrete therapeutics*." [Emphasis added][17]

In a key scholarly work which is effectively a strident critique of non-mainstream religious therapies in the United States, Donald Meyer provides a number of insights. Firstly he places emphasis on the concrete nature of the therapeutic offering, confirming James' comment: across a range of texts from the 1840's through to the 1890's, in the works of Quimby, Henry Wood and Ralph Waldo Trine, he outlines the exercises offered, of which those within the New Thought movement are typical. These consist of the daily reading and re-reading of affirmative statements concerning the self in order to ingest the message and

empower the self. Though often relating to an affirmative soul or spirit power – "God is Love" – they can also be related to the reader as in "I am a being of Strength," or "I will go stronger daily."[18] Secondly, Meyer takes the view that mind-cure "conventionalized lyric transcendentalism into a prosy pragmatism" and highlights as a key period for this process precisely those years when Whitman was producing the first three editions of *Leaves of Grass*:

> Pseudo-sciences and pseudo-religions, hence, had not failed to flourish everywhere. But they flourished with a particular lush abandon in the generation before the Civil War. ... More actively, there proliferated the pseudo-sciences – hydropathies, diet fads, homeopathies, mesmerisms, hypnotisms – along with those curious empiricisms satisfying sheer curiosity about the powers of man which neither old religion nor new science sufficed: phrenologies, spiritualisms, astrologies.[19]

The full trajectory of what can be called mind-cure texts is complex. Out of transcendentalism in mid century by way of Unitarianism emerged pragmatic "concrete" popular psychologies containing spiritual healing those written by authors such as Phineas Parkhurst Quimby and Warren Felt Evans. These, in turn, fed through to Mary Baker Eddy and Christian Science later in the century. A movement called "New Thought" with key authors such as Henry Wood and Ralph Waldo Trine also emerged and sustained itself well into to the twentieth century, offering material well being through training readers to be "In Tune With the Infinite." With the dawn of the twentieth century came works on how to channel the will through thought and succeed in the social arena, including texts by Norman Vincent Peale. Such twentieth century success manuals are also built on the foundation of texts of the 1840's and 50's which offered their own "concrete therapeutics" in books instructing Whitman's contemporaries how to behave in society, how to construct 'character' and thus, how to raise self esteem.

One focus of this study is the relation of Whitman's key poems in the first three editions of *Leaves of Grass* to the advice manuals written by the likes of the Reverend George Weaver, a key figure of the 1850's who produced a range of manuals for young men and women. Allied to this examination is a detailed examination of another significant relationship; that of Whitman to popular phrenology. The common link between these two discourses, which made them of interest to Whitman, is well expressed by Wrobel in his discussion and defence, of the pseudo-sciences:

> The works of the pseudo-scientists regularly invoked the sacred terms of "natural law" as the proof-stone when assaying their own doctrines. ... The premise of an intimate relationship between the human world and nature's eternal processes *offered the hope that a new social order and unlimited personal improvement could be lawfully engineered.* [emphasis added].

And again, in his observation concerning the common reader:

> Ordinary people with reasons less grandiose but no less compelling listened attentively. They wished to know about the laws governing their own constitutions, to reach beyond the merely temporal and establish connection with the eternal, *or simply improve their lives by realizing greater health and the full use of their innate faculties.*[20] [emphasis added]

Wrobel's insight is that a key attraction to the reader is the reassurance of natural laws capable of being clearly understood and providing clear instruction on the regulation of the self and, in addition, promising a fuller, more successful, self. This was true when paternal figures such as Weaver spelt out the rules of 'character' and conduct to the young men of the 1850's. It was compellingly true when phrenology explained the innate faculties of mind as revealed by examination of individual crania.

A number of studies have sought to clarify Whitman's debt to phrenology. Wrobel provides a summary of the various levels of involvement claimed for Whitman in relation to this major pseudo-Science.[21] Whitman reviewed key early phrenological texts as a journalist on *The Brooklyn Daily Eagle;* in his early notebooks he can be seen familiarizing himself with key phrenological terms; he had his head read in July 1849; he used this reading as part of a range of self-promotion packages throughout his career; he had close ties with the phrenological publishing firm of Fowler and Wells who promoted and published the first edition of *Leaves of Grass* and employed him as a staff writer on *Life Illustrated.* To substantiate his important claim that "Whitman's intellectual and spiritual ties to them [Fowler and Wells] were to remain intact throughout his lifetime," Wrobel summarises a number of instances of Whitman being directly influenced; the cosmically-chosen poet-prophet in the *Preface* of *Leaves of Grass* is built around phrenological propensities; individual poems such as "There Was A Child Went Forth" and "Faces" reflect explicitly phrenological doctrine. His contention that phrenology as much as the writings of Emerson brought Whitman to "a boil" is indeed a bold statement, but one this study will substantiate. David Reynolds[22] has sought to trace the place of phrenology in the culture of Whitman's time and its influence on Whitman by focusing on the poet's links to Fowler and Wells. He identifies a clear usage by Whitman of the self-regulatory mechanism built into the phrenological schemata of mental attributes, but restricts Whitman's adoption of this mechanism to evidence drawn from notebook entries, where Whitman seeks to chastise himself and regulate and control his sexual feelings.

The present study will seek to expand significantly on insights catalogued by Wrobel and recent work by Reynolds and Zweig[23] concerning the importance of phrenological concepts and discourse to Whitman and in particular as they were made available to him through journals and advice books published by Fowler and Wells. By exploring the common links popularised phrenology had with advice books and mind-cure texts, which is the grandiose attempt to train and educate the mind, to channel thought so as to create a new happier self, it will be argued that Whitman's relation to phrenological discourse and to the discourse of spiritual advice manuals concerned with "character" and self-esteem is more complex and significant than hitherto recognised.

Recent scholarship, seeking to place Whitman in relation to the history of American religion and spirituality, has opened pathways relevant to the study of Whitman's search for a therapeutic. Dalton[24] has clearly demonstrated the importance to Whitman of a phrenological impulse in his culture which was "as much a popular movement as it was a set of claims ... about the human brain," and which "penned best-selling books" and provided "a road-map to self improvement." He also carefully positions phrenology as a popular spiritual movement within a continuum from Emersonian transcendentalism, with its emphasis on self-reliance, through to "New Thought" and other texts of spiritual and mental self-help,[25] whilst also identifying in *The American Phrenological Journal* radical critiques of the nation and its materialism (acquisitiveness running riot in the "mind" of the nation)[26] which suggest Fowler and his journal were a more complex document of social commentary than has been recognised and, thus, of greater interest to Whitman.

In common with William James, Dalton highlights the importance of what Emerson identified in 1880 as eminently attractive in phrenology, "The attempt [which]... had a certain truth to it; it felt connection where professors denied it, and was leading to a truth which had not yet been announced."[27] Dalton expands this observation, claiming that what was at issue when this connection was made was phrenology's ability to "[militate] against the control of ideas by a religious orthodoxy."[28] Whilst Dalton claims to find Whitman's "best efforts at a 'felt connection' [in] his poems that link the personal and the cosmological," this present study conversely views Whitman as turning the very strengths of phrenology, identified by James, back against its very own doctrines and discourses. It will be proposed that Whitman seeks to offer his contemporaries a mental therapeutic where the "felt connection" is a "meaningful understanding of themselves and their world," as Dalton acknowledges, but one framed around tuition in thinking for oneself in defiance of 'religious orthodoxy.' The controlling orthodoxy of phrenology, it is suggested, does not escape Whitman's critical gaze.

Dalton places phrenology squarely within 'American popular religion':

> Thus in terms of form, content, and meaning, the phrenological movement might be better understood as a variant form of American popular religion. For all its subsequent deficiencies as "science," phrenology was, at its peak, a richly symbolic attempt to understand human nature and human destiny. As such it fulfilled the traditional role of religion by directly addressing questions of identity, social relations, and hopes for the future.[29]

The present study will seek to investigate those aspects of Whitman's poetic which overlap with components of phrenology, as identified by Dalton, such as 'identity' and the individual's sense of mental and social well-being. An attempt will be made

to evaluate how Whitman exploits the 'richly symbolic' movements involving mind-cure which emerge from the phrenological movement Dalton describes. The singularity of the approach taken consists in proposing that Whitman exploits, even as he critiques, a "form" borrowed from phrenological and mind-cure discourse: that of the persuasive master class in how to think positively about the self, and suggesting that rather than crafting a "felt connection" between self and cosmos, as Dalton suggests, Whitman has the intent of developing such a connection between his reader's self and the power of the individual's mental resources.

The Whitman poems for analysis range from 1855 through to 1860[30] with, in addition, some cautious observations concerning trends, identified in poems of 1860, which, it is claimed, are maintained beyond the third edition of *Leaves of Grass* and on into *Democratic Vistas*. It is suggested that within each of the first three editions of *Leaves of Grass* Whitman draws on and critiques mind-cure discourses in the manner already briefly described. In addition a key aspect of the present study is to document that Whitman develops and modulates his response to mind-cure therapies within this time-frame. To accomplish this, the analysis builds on the work of M Jimmie Killingsworth.[31] He has carefully documented the construction of, and the evolution of, Whitman's sexual politics within the early editions of *Leaves of Grass* and proposed a trajectory of loss, "a progressive chastening of Whitman's sexual politics,"[32] where a celebration on Whitman's part of sexual energy, articulating "radical assertiveness" is "replaced by argumentation and appeals to authority."[33] This diminution of the political and sexual self is hastened, he claims, by Whitman resorting to, post 1855, "an acceptance of the productivity principle embodied in a nineteenth century model of sexual behaviour and physiology,"[34] derived from

contact with medical texts and advice manuals and journal publications from Fowler and Wells.

This study will propose a more complex model of influence from phrenology and mind-cure and other advice books advocating mental therapy; one where in *Leaves of Grass,* both in 1855 and 1856, a "radical assertiveness" is maintained through the construction of a healthy mental therapeutic, the crafting of which depends on a critique of popular contemporary therapeutics. It will be argued that there is then a trajectory of loss as Whitman's offering of a "felt experience" modulates into something that begins to bear traces of the very mechanistic and materialistic therapies he had opposed However, it is claimed this trend is discernible only in 1860 and gathers pace thereafter.

Chapter One examines two key early poems, "Poem of Many In One" and "Song of the Open Road", to establish that the former is crafted from the Preface to *Leaves of Grass* so as to contain a gospel of mental hope, or master class in healthy thinking, and the latter contains a therapeutic core. Chapter Two further analyses "Song of the Open Road" to examine how the mental strength advocated in the poem is constructed in opposition to counsel and advice given in *The American Phrenological Journal.* Chapter Three explores Whitman's manner of address to his audience for mental therapeutics and establishes how far it deviates from the discourse patterns of advice givers within the Fowler and Wells stable. Chapter Four focuses on "Song of Myself" in the first edition of *Leaves of Grass.* It contends that, despite its recognized complexity, this major poem shares with other poems of 1855 and 1865 the portrayal of a mental master-class in how to think about the self, and

thus how to achieve happiness. It argues that one neglected theme of "Song of Myself" is actually a provocative and challenging master class in defiant positive thinking. The frontispiece of the 1855 edition is examined to propose that Whitman's use of the daguerreotype-based image stands in defiance of Fowler and Wells' styles of portraiture in *The American Phrenological Journal* and as a rejection of the ideological basis of its instruction. Chapter Five focuses on two short poems to review critically Cooter's assessment of the ideological and cultural significance of phrenology, to establish Whitman's trenchant critique of that ideology and in the case of the neglected "Who Wills With His Own Brain," to examine Whitman's clear exposition of his recurrent therapeutic intent couched as a provocative challenge. Chapter Six proposes that Whitman attempted successfully to carve out a therapeutic discourse in opposition to advice givers such as Henry Ward Beecher, who rose to prominence in the ante-bellum years. It demonstrates that Whitman took a highly critical view and abhorred the mental "manacles" which shackled Beecher and those young men whose thought patterns he sought to govern. Chapter Seven begins to map significant changes in the major poems of 1860 as they continue to reveal Whitman's desire to fashion a mental therapeutic. Through consideration of one major new and one short poem Whitman's therapeutic is shown to be changing, becoming more complex and conflicted than previously. Through a detailed examination of how "Song of Joys" is rearranged in subsequent editions it is claimed that there is an ironic juxtaposition apparent when this refashioning is considered alongside the earlier careful arrangement made to shape the Preface into "Poem of Many In One", since a preoccupation with sharing the "felt experience" of the power of positive thought earlier is replaced by a instruction in more abstract spiritual powers. This trend, it is suggested, can be traced through to *Democratic*

Vistas where the discourse, and indeed the formal arrangement, mirrors mind-cure discourse of a mechanistic and materialist nature.

Early in his *The Lunar Light of Whitman's Poetry,* M Wynn Thomas locates a passage from "Poem of You Whoever You Are" to exemplify both the problem of lack of self-respect Whitman seeks to address and his proposed solution:

> I will leave all, and come and make hymns of you;
> None have understood you, but I understand you,
> None have done justice to you, you have not done justice to yourself,
> None but have found you imperfect, I only find no
> Imperfection in you,
> None but would subordinate you, I am only he who will
> Never consent to subordinate you,
> I am only he who places over you no master, owner, better,
> God, beyond what waits intrinsically in yourself.[35]

His comment is that this demonstrates Whitman's "extravagant impulse to praise the unsung qualities of the non-descript American," because he "lacks his full measure of self-respect." This short poem will feature strongly in the present study precisely because, in constructing a challenging mental therapeutic for the 'non-descript American' within the poems studied, Whitman's entirely admirable impulse is to help him or her realize their 'unsung qualities.' In his preface to *The Growth of Leaves of Grass,* M Jimmie Killingsworth notes that the theory of organicism "informs not only Whitman's best work but also the sturdiest lines of descent in the critical tradition."[36] The present study seeks to conform to what Killingsworth describes as the modern organic approach which:

> follows the poets work through stages of emergence, proliferation, maturation, and decline, admitting loss as well as gain as a consequence of organic growth.[37]

By drawing on and seeking modestly to extend the work of Aspiz and Thomas and Reynolds, of Dalton from religious studies, and of Trachtenberg and Cooter from cultural studies, the methodological framework to be employed which will sit within this organic approach, will be a New Historicist one, seeking to illuminate Whitman's texts through study of the popular culture which surrounded him and with which he engaged.

In seeking to begin an exploration of Whitman's struggle to carve out a therapeutic discourse in opposition to discourses which foregrounded mental control and discipline it is hoped that the following may emerge: further evidence of Whitman's ability to adopt a complex and critical stance to elements within popular culture, a just measure of the significance of phrenology in Whitman's early work, and an appreciation of how important to Whitman was the promotion of the healthy, restorative act of positive thinking Lastly it is to be hoped that a methodology which seeks to study the engagement of an artist with his culture proves able to do justice to Whitman's attempt to absorb his America and his comrades' troubled minds.

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[1] Donald Meyer, *The Positive Thinkers: A Study of the American Quest for Health, Wealth and Personal Power from Mary Baker Eddy to Norman Vincent Peal,* (Garden City, New York: Anchor Books, 1965), xiii.

[2] Variorum 1, p.82 ll. 1325-1327

[3] Ibid 1. p. 83. ll. 1340 -1344.

[4] Edwin Haviland Miller, *Walt Whitman's 'Song of Myself': A Mosaic of Interpretations* (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1989).

[5] Variorum 1. ll. 1342-1343.
[6] All references are to the continuous run available on microfiche in the New York Public Library, henceforth APJ.
[7] *The American Phrenological Journal*, including the feature 'A Phrenological Portrait' was consulted in November 2001 from the only extant continuous run of the journal, housed in the microfiche collection of the New York Public Library; G.S. Weaver, *Hopes and Helps for The Young of Both Sexes* (New York: Fowler and Wells, 1853); Henry Ward Beecher, *Lectures to Young Men on Various Important Subjects* (Salem, Cincinnnati, 1846); *Life Thoughts; Gathered from the Extemporaneous Discourses of Henry Ward Beecher by One of His Congregation(* Boston, Phillps, Sampson and Company, 1859); O. S. Fowler and L.N. Fowler, *The Illustrated Self-Instructor* (Fowler and Wells Publishers: New York, 1856); *Webster's 1828 Dictionary, Electronic Version, CD Rom* (PO Box 2201, Independence, MO 64055: Christian Technologies.Inc., 2002).
[8] Critics such as Ezra Greenspan. *Walt Whitman and the American Reader* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), David Kuebrich, *Minor Prophecy: Walt Whitman's New American Religion* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1989). Most recently, in relation to class identification, Andrew Lawson, *Walt Whitman and the Class Struggle* (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 2006), and in relation to therapy through celebrity, David Haven Blake, *Walt Whitman and the Culture of American Celebrity (*New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2006*)*.
[9] Harold Aspiz, *Walt Whitman and the Body Beautiful* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1980) and Harold Aspiz, *So Long! Walt Whitman's Poetry of Death* (Tuscaloosa and London: The University of Alabama Press, 2004).
[10] *Body Beautiful,* p.157. His gloss concerns "Song of Myself," Variorum 1 l. 650.
[11] Ibid., p. 157. Italics in original. His citation is UPP, II: 71-72.
[12] Ibid., p. 156.
[13] Edward F. Grier, ed., *Walt Whitman Notes and Unpublished Prose Manuscripts*, 6 Vols., (New York: New York University Press, 1984), Vol., 1 p. 72.
[14] Ibid., p. 79.
[15] William James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience* (Collins, Fontana, London ,1960) p.102-103.
[16] Ibid., p.106-107
[17] Ibid., p. 108
[18] Meyer's examples are drawn from Henry Wood, *Ideal Suggestion through Mental Photography, A Restorative System for Home and Private Use* (Boston: Lee and Shepherd, 1893).
[19] *Positive Thinkers,* p. 48-49.
[20] Arthur Wrobel, ed., *Pseudo-Science and Society in Nineteenth-Century America* (Lexington: The University of Kentucky Press, 1987), p. 9.
[21] Arthur Wrobel, "Phrenology" in J. R. LeMaster and Donald D. Kummings, eds., *Walt Whitman An Encyclopaedia* (New York and London: Garland, 1998), pp., 520-523.
[22] David S Reynolds, *Walt Whitman's America; A Cultural Biography* (New York: Vintage Books, 1996).
[23] Paul Zweig, *Walt Whitman: The Making of the Poet* (Harmonsworth: Penguin, 1986).
[24] Lisle Dalton, "Phrenology and Religion in Antebellum America and Whitman's *Leaves of Grass*" in *Mickle Street Review* (15).
[25] In *Restless Souls*: *The Making of American Spirituality :from Emerson to Oprah* (San Francisco, Harper, 2005) Leigh Eric Schmidt identifies a key issue related to Whitman's therapeutic which he sees as central to the new spirituality which he traces throughout his book : "Deep in the heart of the new spirituality was an exploration of finitude alongside freedom, resignation alongside autonomy, submission alongside assertion.(p.223). He also places Whitman in a spiritually and socially-committed tradition as he [Schmidt] seeks to " emphasise the alternative [to harsh criticism of sprituality] evident from the long history made visible in the foregoing chapters of this book. Here a tradition emerges – call it transcendental cosmopolitanism, Inner-Light liberalism, Whitman's sublime religious democracy, or the Spiritual Left- in which the primacy of individual experience is joined to a whole web of spiritual practices and social commitments"(p.286).
[26] Dalton, p.15, note[41].
[27] Quoted in Dalton, p.27.
[28] Ibid., p.27.
[29] Ibid., p.4. In his endnote [7] Dalton duly acknowledges the importance of Roger Cooter, *The Cultural Meaning of Popular Science: Phrenology and the Organisation of Consent in Nineteenth – Century Britain* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1984) for an interpretation of "phrenology as a system of symbolic meaning." See Chapter Five for my discussion of Cooter.

[30] All references to poems from *Leaves of Grass 1856* and *Leaves of Grass 1860* are from *Major Authors on CD Rom: Facsimile of Leaves of Grass, Broklyn, New York 1856, and Boston 1860* (Research Publications Inc. 1982) henceforth Leaves of Grass 1856 and Leaves of Grass 1860.
[31] M. Jimmie Killingsworth, *Whitman's Poetry of the Body* (Chapel Hill &London: University of North Carolina Press, 1989).
[32] Ibid., xix.
[33] Ibid., xviii.
[34] Ibid., xviii.
[35] M. Wynn. Thomas, *The Lunar Light of Whitman's Poetry*(Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1987), p.10. Citing I:215.
[36] M. Jimmie Killingsworth, *The Growth of "Leaves of Grass": The Organic Tradition in Whitman Studies* (Columbia, South Carolina: Camden House, 1993), ix.
[37] Ibid., p. 3.

CHAPTER ONE

Crafting a Therapeutic Core

In the first section this chapter examines the issue of the presence of elements of the Preface to *Leaves of Grass* in "Poem of Many In One" which becomes "By Blue Ontario's Shore." A critique is offered of the readings of the poem which argue that Whitman uses Preface material to contribute to general announcements concerning his poetic role. By offering a detailed analysis of the actual redistribution of the source materials into the poem and evaluating their contribution to both the heightened moments and the overall structure of the poem it is demonstrated that the reworking is far from piecemeal. Whitman's purpose, it is claimed, is to outline a master-class in the power of positive thinking and, through careful rearrangement of his source materials, to articulate a therapeutic purpose akin to that promoted in mind-cure texts seeking to promote the channelling of the power of the mind.

The second section of the chapter builds upon Harold Aspiz's insights concerning the content, style and cultural resonance of "Song of the Open Road" in relation to its electrifying challenge to its readership. An analysis of the structure and discourse patterns of the poem consolidates and extends Aspiz's claims for the 1856 version of the poem and charts Whitman's careful outlining of a challenging therapeutic dialogue with the reader, one which begins to position his own mind therapy in opposition to discourses provided for his contemporaries by Fowler and Wells and Weaver.

There is general acknowledgement that the contents of the 1855 Preface to the first edition of *Leaves of Grass* have an intimate relation with the poetry of subsequent editions of *Leaves of Grass*. I wish to review the nature of that relationship by focusing on the linkage between the Preface and "Poem of Many In One", contained in the second edition *Leaves of Grass* 1856. This is the poem which became "By Blue Ontario's Shore" in subsequent editions. It is also the single poem of the 1856 edition in which the most direct transposition from the Preface can be catalogued, leading the editors of the *Reader's Edition* to state:

> In theme and intent this poem is essentially the poetical equivalent of the 1855 Preface, from which in its present form, it draws more than sixty of its lines – and many more in the earlier edition ...It originated as one of the twenty new poems of the second edition under the title Poem of Many In One and about one fourth of its then 280 lines were transferred from the 1855 Preface.[1]

Key critics have chosen to focus on "By Blue Ontario's Shore" and the post 1856 version of the poem, in order to identify the key concepts of the poet's role along with his relation to his contemporary audience and to political events which are articulated in the later text. This approach is neatly summarised in *The Whitman Encyclopaedia*:

> One of the most heavily revised compositions .... (it) lays out the central features of Whitman's democratic idealism and describes the poet's role in fostering it.[2]

However, this approach limits the amount of close critical attention paid to the earlier, 1856, version of the poem, or to its linkage to the 1855 Preface. In a study of the 1867 version of the poem and the reworking Whitman undertook to reflect his

Civil War experiences, M. Wynn Thomas restricts the importance of the earlier version thus:

> "By Blue Ontario's Shore". This is a piece that had in 1856 been constructed, not altogether satisfactorily, out of the 1855 Preface... [3]

Gay Wilson Allen, in focusing attention on the 1867 version of the poem and its coherence, does so at the expense of the possible coherence of the earlier version, claiming the 1856 version is "merely a poetic arrangement of the 1855 Preface", and that the 1867 version has "much improved coherence" as "the whole composition has been greatly improved." Indeed he claims the 1856 version is only "bravado".[4]

Whilst both critics stress the importance of the poem as a source for Whitman's ideas on democracy and on the poetic role, it is only with reference to the later versions that they document this claim. Indeed Gay Wilson Allen argues that one of Whitman's major themes in the 1867 version is "The Throes of Democracy," and that in amplifying his representation of the bard in that version of the poem, Whitman is addressing a new theme – "Democracy in travail".[5] 'Throes' carries a suggestion of violent struggle and pain suffered on a personal and national level, and M Wynn Thomas makes a similar observation in describing the newly inserted opening verse paragraph of 1867 as capturing "Whitman's disturbed post-war psychology".[6]

In keeping with this approach which considers the theme of dislocation, a number of recent studies have begun to address the poem as an articulation of struggle and pain,[7] albeit without major concentration on the 1856 version. These have begun to

suggest a theme of cultural anxiety being addressed and overcome by the poet within "Poem of Many In One," in advance of similar cultural concerns being addressed by Whitman in later versions of the poem.

As indicated previously I wish to consider the 1856 version of the poem as a cultural document of some significance in its own right, one demanding a study of the manner in which it articulates the issues concerning selfhood in the culture of the time. I believe the role of the poet that emerges from such a study is one where he is called upon, and brings himself forward, to confront the dislocation that critics have identified and that careful analysis will indicate the importance of the power of therapeutic mental healing in aiding this process.

Interestingly enough Harold Aspiz, whose work[8] is so important in opening up the exploration of Whitman's links to popular mental and physiological discourses, has little to say about the link between the 1855 Preface and the 1856 *Leaves of Grass.* He does pursue an extremely useful line of thought on the distinctive characteristics of the whole of the 1856 edition of *Leaves of Grass*, one very much in keeping with the spirit of the present study. He claims that in sharing Fowler and Wells' "republican reformism" Whitman produced, in the second edition, "a guidebook to the secrets of health, social justice and spiritual advancement," and goes on to suggest that the book contains "prescriptive poems about the attainment of physical, spiritual and natural greatness." In summary he contends that "its poems could, in fact, serve a perceptive reader, as a manual of physical-moral self discovery, offering an inspirational gospel". The challenge for the reader, Aspiz claims, is "to take heart and to acknowledge his own potential for fulfilment."[9] In the context of the

pervasive instructional materials of the times this is the daunting challenge Whitman is anxious to provoke and assuage.

From his cultural history and new historicist approach to mid nineteenth century literature, David Reynolds has approached Whitman's work in a manner similar to that of Aspiz, in that his analysis focuses on cultural unease and the possibilities of a healing doctrine made available through Whitman's poetic. He considers that the poems added in 1856 to *Leaves of Grass* provide "healing alternatives" to social defects of the time. He suggests we consider a Whitman who conceived his role to be that of "healing a fragmented America". His position on "Poem of Many In One" and its subsequent reworking as "By Blue Ontario's Shore" is summarised as follows:

> The poem remained throughout subsequent editions Whitman's definitive social statement to which he added topical references (about the Civil War, for instance) as time passed. In the 1856 edition it served as a kind of thesis poem reminding readers of all the potentially unifying phenomena that might help heal the nation and the world.[10]

It is indeed, a "thesis" poem, defining what would remain as Whitman's social statement, offering, as Aspiz claims, a realisation of the healing power that the poet challenges his reader to release. However, to apply the title "thesis" to the poem is also an act of severe limitation. It suggests a coldness, perhaps even an abstraction, the outlining of a plan or proposal in meticulous detail. It removes the possibility of examining the poem as praxis, as a concrete example of mental strength provided for the reader. Equally an emphasis on such an approach prevents the exploration of what is neatly captured in Aspiz's notion of the poem as an act of 'realisation' – the intellectual grappling with language and thought which I suggest the reader is

engaged in through the poem. The healing power is not only offered and explained but is actually exemplified within the poem itself.

"Poem of Many In One", "Song of the Open Road" and Whitman's signature poem "Song of Myself" share a significant linguistic feature with mind-cure texts: the challenging direct question to the 'sufferer' which is also a marker as to the limitation of that person's current mental powers. The manner in which the Reverend G. S. Weaver, a key figure offering mental instruction to the young mid-century, assails his young tutees is typical, "youthful reader, are you one of this unwise number? Does the cry of this sentinel ring through the arches of your soul...?" At times the challenge consists of a veritable fusillade of questions:

> Has poverty robbed you of a single intellectual power? Has it not sharpened them all? Has it shut you out from nature, from truth, and from God? ...Has it broken the silken chord that binds you to your fellows? ... Has it palsied your senses? ...Has it sealed the book of your own heart?[11]

It has not been sufficiently noticed in commentaries on "Song of Myself" that such questions are central to the poet's challenge to the reader. For instance the first such challenge in "Song of Myself" is, "Have you reckon'd a thousand acres much? Have you reckon'd the earth much?"[12] Edwin Haviland Miller's survey of interpretations of the poem catalogues the section which contains this opener as one containing, in response to this bold challenge, both sexual fantasy and an explanation by Whitman of the unmediated power of speech.[13] However if attention is paid to the challenging wordplay in "reckon'd" an additional strand of meaning unfolds, one referring to a challenge being thrown down relating to both the constrictive and liberating aspects of thought. Whitman, it can be argued, is challenging the reader to abandon his or

her acquisitive method of looking at the world, one focusing on possession and power. He is freeing the mental capacities so that more powerful thoughts concerning the self (indicated in "you shall listen to all sides and filter them from yourself") can be called into play.[14]

When we approach the 1856 "Poem of Many In One" and examine its first 20 lines it is immediately apparent that the speaker poses a challenge to the alert reader, one concerning ways of thinking about the self in relation to the world. The key early question, which soon emerges as the keynote of the poem, is strikingly similar to both the mind-cure challenges and the 'reckoning of reckoning' from "Song of Myself": "Have you thought there could be but a single/ Supreme?" The full dramatic effect of this strategically-placed[15] question, with its challenge and promise, becomes apparent with the 1856 edition's next line, placed at the top of the following page, "There can be any number of Supremes...all is for/ individuals- all is for you."[16]

As a keynote it sets up the promise of the poem which, to paraphrase Aspiz, could be considered to be a manual of mental self discovery. When Whitman seductively says much later in the poem, "Oh I see now that this America is only you and me/ Its power, weapons, testimony, are you and me,"[17] it is important to dwell on the suggestiveness of the 'now' that is being referred to. It can refer to the present historical scene both he and reader inhabit. He is, I suggest, also sounding a triumphant note, articulating the completion of the 'conversion experience' at the core of the poem, that of the awakening of the mind to new powers of apprehension.

What I have called the keynote of this experience forms section three of all editions of the poem. I wish to suggest that the 1856 text that emerges in keeping with this keynote unfolds as a manual of mental self discovery precisely because it is carefully constructed through repositioning of material from the 1855 Preface. This particular keynote passage is an example not just of simple borrowing, but of the particular shaping and re fashioning of Preface material, involving in this instance a transposition of paragraph fourteen of the prose work. The manipulation of the keynote is indicative of consistent repositioning which is worthy of careful consideration.

In order to fully explore what is a subtle and very careful re alignment of Preface material to form the 1856 text it is necessary to consider the contribution of two critical articles dealing with the linkage between Preface material and "By Blue Ontario's Shore".[18] The first, an exploration of Whitman's revisions of "By Blue Ontario's Shore" as a "repository of germinal ideas" and as a "development of Whitman's thought toward the poet and the nation"[19], is of less direct concern to the present study. Its main focus is on establishing the centrality of the 1867 edition of the poem and consideration of the 1856 text is minimal.[20]

The second is, by contrast, of considerable significance in moving beyond a mere cataloguing of the poem of 1856 as a repetition of several key Whitman themes derived from the 1855 Preface.[21] Weathers is intent on establishing the structural resemblance of the Preface to its 1856 offspring, and on identifying the purposeful re-ordering of Preface material Whitman undertook to foreground his key concerns.

Weathers lays store by Whitman's late comment concerning the Preface's relation to the poetry, "As you say, a heap of it – all the best of it – has got into my later verse, one place or another."[22]. He also sets out his aim as being to rectify a significant scholarly omission, "and no thorough, investigation has been made of just how and where the Preface 'got into' the poet's later verse."[23] He makes a simple and convincing case for studying a limited number of key poems in the 1856 and 1860 editions since:

> All the poems suggesting this relationship [poems in which the thought units so clearly reflect the vocabulary or the figures used to express the same idea in the Preface]...belong to the 1856 and 1860 editions and *have in the original editions certain corroborating relationships in arrangement.* [emphasis added][24]

I wish to acknowledge the importance of Weather's insights and to build upon his approach, which asserts Whitman's careful redeployment of his Preface material to enrich the 1856 "Poem of Many In One".

It is necessary however, to document in more detail than Weathers does[25] his claims that "the first (method) was to lift out whole paragraphs or parts of paragraphs, *maintaining the unity and sequence* of the original"[26] [emphasis added] and that:

> for the 1856 poem certain paragraphs stating these ideas were broken up into verse form, *arranged in their original order except for one significant shift* and enclosed in a second introduction and conclusion, with the addition of only one new note and the elimination of not one of the basic ideas. [emphasis added][27]

Appendix One contains a diagrammatic representation of the connections and "significant shifts" first outlined in Weathers' article. To provide a more

comprehensive analysis I have drawn on material not available to Weathers, the notes to "By Blue Ontario's Shore" in the Variorum edition,[28] and the footnotes relating to the 1855 Preface in the *Reader's Edition*[29].

My analysis confirms Weathers' main claim. Material is directly transposed from a range of paragraphs of the original Preface, spread from the original opener to the closing paragraph. Eight of these paragraph sources do indeed result in transpositions which in turn duplicate the linear sequence of the originals. Weathers' search for 'significant shifts' yielded only one example, but there are in fact four such repositionings of source material.

In addition to the keynote paragraph, verse paragraph number three, already briefly discussed, verse paragraphs six, ten, thirteen and fourteen derive their core content in such a manner. Paragraph six in particular is the beneficiary of material from far distant parts of the original Preface. Adjusting our focus a little allows the observation that paragraphs thirteen and fourteen of the Preface are quite singular feeds for both the opening, and the beginning of the finale of the 1856 version of "Poem of Many In One".

In this connection I wish to return to my claim that the structure of the poem forms a manual of mental health, a master class by Whitman in self-esteem through thought power. Paragraph fourteen of the Preface[30] is the initial source for the grand promises which ring out throughout the poem. Immediately after the lines in the preface concerning "unnumbered Supremes" which feed the challenging question in "Poem of Many In One", discussed earlier, Whitman makes a decisive assertion:

> ..... and that men can be good or grand only of the consciousness of their supremacy within them[31]

This remark merits careful attention; although, unlike the case of its adjacent lines, the exact phraseology is not carried through to the poem, the spirit of the remark informs the poem. Whitman can often put language under strain as he strives to challenge the reader. The "of" here is a conflation of "due to" and "through the means of" as Whitman struggles to convey, at one and the same time, the elevated state of self possession possible to all and the means by which this is achieved – through awareness of their mental potential.

The final flourish of this paragraph is equally interesting. It is redistributed to the poem "To You Whoever You Are", which will be dealt with in chapter five. In terms of the nature of the assertion made and the language used it bears a strong resemblance to mind-cure texts of self improvement:

> What do you think is the grandeur of storms and dismemberments and the deadliest battles and wrecks and the wildest fury of the elements and the power of the sea and the motion of nature and of the throes of human desires and dignity and hate and love? It is that something in the soul which says, Rage on, Whirl on, *I tread master here* [emphasis added] and everywhere. Master of the spasms of the sky and of the shatter of the sea, Master of nature and passion and death. And of all terror and all pain.[32]

This is an atypical, vaunting, mind-cure claim. The external world is imaged as a physically confronting and dangerous threat. Through mastery (a key term in all mind-cure texts)[33] of the self by controlling thought and harnessing its powers the individual, it is claimed, can be a 'supreme'. Most significantly the fulfilment is always instant –'now' or 'here' in the very act of reading and attuning to the

message. The promise is always one of individual and social anxiety and pain being assuaged. This is neatly suggested by Whitman in his closing promise of the possibility of something beyond the physical being confronted in his mention of "terror and ... pain". A careful exposition of this poem's intriguing promise concerning mental powers and its defiant stance against convention will be undertaken in a later chapter.

Paragraph six of "Poem of Many In One" has a complex range of sources from the Preface and is extremely long, having what Whitman would term 'vista'. Indeed the first line of what was the next section, eight, in the 1856 poem links the two sections by claiming, "Others take finish, but the republic ... ever keeps vista."[34] Its keynote is placed at the foot of page 183 where Whitman announces that America is, "Race of race and bards to corroborate,"[35] and then provides a pen-portrait of the corroborating bard at the top of the next page with, "Of them, standing among them, one lifts to the light his west-bred face."[36]

Whitman then, famously, tallies the ingredients that go to making the bard he feels his times requires, and simultaneously exhibits the poetic activity which complies with these 'ingredients'. He has his land, in detail, literally flow in his veins and soul – he "incarnates this land". He also incorporates the "noble characters"[37] of mechanics, their manners and gait, and their physiognomy and phrenology. In the 1856 poem, section six finishes with a line subsequently removed, "For these, and the like, their own voices. For these, /space ahead."[38]

In the final lines of the section Whitman pulls into his poem, and thus into the poem's discourse involving the power of the mind, an impressive range of potential social problematics: the awesome social mobility of the time becomes "the fluid movement of the population"; capitalism's tentacles becomes "Factories, mercantile life, ... north-east, north-west, south-east"; and slavery generating "stern opposition" is also considered.[39] The positioning of these is a careful demonstration of how thinking positively about these matters, giving them 'voice,' clears the way ahead. It does so by performing a transformative action – making less problematic issues of social concern.

In section twenty three of the Preface, the section which feeds into the section of the poem being discussed, Whitman lays down the demands which the poet of America must meet, which I suggest, both underpins the poem at the point under discussion and helps prepare for later sections. Firstly, the poet must be, "himself the age transfigured."[40] It is a simple matter to acknowledge that Whitman has attempted to comply with this demand in Section six. The second demand is expressed negatively:

> and if to him is not opened the eternity which gives
> similitude to all periods and locations and processes and
> animate and inanimate forms, and which is the bond of time.[41]

I wish to suggest that this 'state' of enlarged understanding, very reminiscent of the mental 'laws' spoken of in mind-cure, is actually being exemplified, not simply described, in the section of "Poem of Many In One" just discussed. It consists of having faith, not just in the nation, but also, more importantly, in the poet as an example of a self able to maintain self-esteem by thinking positive thoughts in the

face of the most daunting social and political problems. I wish to examine the remaining key sections of the poem to trace the connections suggested here.

Section ten, as shown in Appendix One, draws from the Preface in a manner similar to the other sections. It certainly announces itself in a manner that is dramatic and grand, "Of mankind, the poet is the equable man,"[42] and the final line of page 188 is equally assertive, "He is the arbiter of the diverse, he is the key."[43] The remainder of this section of the poem does, I believe, hold the 'key' to Whitman's master class in positive thinking. It does so by picking up themes already adumbrated and, in addition, by suggesting an intimate connection between 'faith', 'health', and positive thinking.

The first verse paragraph of the section which terminates at:

> he sees eternity in men and women – he does
> not see men and women as dreams or dots[44]

has received considerable critical scrutiny.[45] I believe it deserves further study.

Early in the section the poet is seen as a source of a 'spirit of peace' which contains, amongst other elements, 'health'. The poet is next seen as capable of acting against the very movements, negative and threatening, of history itself through epitomising, as a model, "steady faith"[46]. Most important of all in this unfolding master plan is the next movement. Whitman now indicates in two lines what underpins the 'faith' which is so necessary in his opinion:

> As he sees farthest he has the most faith,
> His thoughts are the hymns of the praise of things.[47]

He suggests it is the ability to have a thought pattern which sings (the word 'hymns' is surely to suggest adulatory content and affirmation), allowing a 'faith' which can transcend the problems of the immediate by adopting a longer, wider viewpoint. And such an enlarged point of view is one based on positive thinking – that is the key message here.

The next section of the 1856 text concerning an 'American literate' was removed in subsequent reprintings of *Leaves of Grass*. However, in the 1856 text, it provides an interesting illumination of the empowered poet, and, by implication, those who follow him. Perhaps the most interesting line in this section is one where Whitman adopts the trope of light, "As he emits himself, facts are showered over with light."[48] Through thinking positive thoughts, and having, therefore, faith, the whole world is transformed. As Whitman sets out his catalogue of what can be achieved it is the word 'gleam' that holds the reader's attention.[49] However, the most significant phrase is "emits himself", containing as it does Whitman's contention that the poet of America and those who follow his example in having 'faith' can find a new personal power source in the (mental) self.

The closing verse paragraph of section ten is another example of critical neglect; only J. Perrin Warren[50] has sought to tease out the implications of Whitman's choice of what constitutes the necessary language repertoire of the bard of the new America. For the purposes of our present considerations two points emerge concerning this verse paragraph. Firstly the opening line, "Language-using controls the rest"[51] has particular relevance to mind-cure approaches to self-improvement

where the repetition of certain key sentences and the thought they contain is claimed to help achieve mastery and control.[52] Secondly, one sentence in the list of the wonders of language serves to group together, foregrounded at the very start of the list, three language referents. These are also a trio involved in personal development, "Language of growth, faith, self esteem."[53]

The last of the trio is picked up again in the finale of section thirteen. It is at this point in the poem that two major transformations of material from the Preface (paragraphs eight and thirteen) to adjacent verse paragraphs takes place to produce a dramatic moment. Significantly, the 1856 text gives more prominence to self-esteem than later variants:[54]

> Friendship, self-esteem, justice, health, clear the
> way with irresistible power.[55]

Whitman clearly intends this celebration of self-esteem as an unstoppable force to be read in the light of his emphatic statement, a few lines earlier, that there already exist poets, one of whose key qualities, bathing them in self-esteem, is positive thinking:

> Already a nonchalant breed silently fills the
> houses and streets,
> People's lips salute only doers, lovers, satisfiers,
> *positive knowers.* [emphasis added][56]

The opening line of section fourteen, "Give me the pay I have served for!"[57] is the most direct plea from the poet. It is now that the two verse paragraphs which have been the beneficiaries of the major shifts in the disruption of the order of paragraphs in the preface work together at the core of the poem. Section thirteen, as has been

noted, delivers a call for what I typified in the introduction, by way of Emerson and James, as the positive "felt connection"; it does so by demanding "the greatest original practical example" modelled already by the "nonchalant breed" of "positive knowers" and "self-esteem...clear(s) the way, with irresistible power"[58] to make this possible. The first two lines of section fourteen are craftily ambiguous; they are, at one and the same time, a plea and a command. The "pay" Whitman refers to can be approached by means of the observation in paragraph nine of the Preface that:

> He [the greatest poet] consumes an eternal passion and is indifferent which chance happens and which possible contingency of fortune or misfortune and persuades daily and hourly his delicious pay[59]

The key word here is "persuade" introducing what is a very complex and compacted description of the poetic role, one entirely relevant to the key moment in "Poem of Many In One". The role involves being "indifferent" to the vagaries of fortune and daily life, being entirely focused ("consumes a passion") and able to replace hourly-paid life's problems with a way of looking at the world which "pays off" in allowing the world to be faced, day in day out. The pun on "pay" is extremely clever and the addition of "delicious" is a masterstroke. If daily pay for work in the social workplace is necessary and appreciated, it is only the "pay" received for what the poet gives out as a mental and poetic and spiritual nourishment, to help combat the social world, that can be termed "delicious" – for poet and follower. But Whitman knows he has to make the "felt connection", has to demonstrate and "persuade" his would-be followers. In the Preface the preceding paragraph with the canonical section starting "This is what you shall do..." prepared the way for the "delicious pay" moment. In "Poem of Many In One" something akin to this is coming to a climax in the pivotal words, "Give me the pay I have served for."

If Whitman prepared the ground in the Preface for his dramatic announcement about the poet's role, he has done no less in the poem, indicating, as has been established, the need for thinking of the self as a "supreme," the need to have a "voice" and, crucially, the need to think positively about the self since positive thoughts empower self-esteem. Therefore Whitman feels warranted in making the plea he makes, since he has "served for" his "pay" in opening up all these exemplars in the first half of the poem. The remainder of section fourteen is a poetic rendition of some elements of the effusive Preface material (thus reversing the format of paragraphs eight and nine in the Preface). This, in essence, picks up that element of "give me the pay" which is a plea. It is not a subtle tactic but Whitman makes his case, and commands a response whilst also pleading his case. "I have.. I have.. I have" is a rolling testament with which he confronts the reader.

The lines at the end of section fourteen and the start of fifteen play an equally important part in Whitman's commentary on the master class he is conducting which continues to contain a self-protective element of pleading:

> Whom I have staid with once, I have found long-
> ing for me ever afterwards.
> I swear I begin to see the meaning of these things![60]

C Carrol Hollis[61] has commented that the first line, along with others, such as "plunging his semitic muscle"[62] were removed after 1856, as Whitman self-censored in reaction to contemporary feedback. Whilst acknowledging the frisson of sexuality Whitman teases the reader with, it is also likely he is referring to the seductiveness of being guided towards thinking intimate, positive thoughts about oneself. As part of

his pleading Whitman is playing on a suggestive link between repressed sexual attraction and repressed thoughts about the worth of the self. This displays a desire on his part to establish distance from the stern moralistic stance taken by mind-cure advocates even as it seems to be addressing areas of concern they sought to address. As will be easily demonstrated, they commanded whilst Whitman teases, entices and almost begs for his example to be copied.

The second line at this cross-over point from section fourteen to fifteen is important in two separate ways. Firstly it continues the spirited dialogue Whitman is having with his readership; keeping up a commentary, he is saying something akin to, "Hold on a minute, I am understanding the big areas of life – 'these things'." He is also through "these things" referring to the matters raised in the sections up to the end of fourteen, those referred to above – self worth and esteem – raising these through positive thinking.

Equally important is the role this particular verb phrase plays from here to the end of the poem. Every verse paragraph except the very last (which most interestingly has a sequence of "I Will's") has "I swear" as a key element. As so often with Whitman the bravado flourish of his language masks a very considered choice of language and the form and purpose of this verb phrase warrants careful consideration. The sequence is as follows:

> I swear I begin to see the meaning of things! (Section 15, l. 250)
> I swear nothing is so good that ignores individuals! (Section 15, l. 256)
> I swear I will stand by my own nativity-pious
> Or impious, so be it!
> I swear I am charmed with nothing except
> Nativity! (Section 16, ll. 263- 264)

I swear I have had enough of mean and impotent
Modes of expressing love for men and
Women! (Section16, l. 267)
I swear I will have each quality of my race in myself! (Section 16, l. 269)
I swear I dare not shirk any part of myself! (Section 17, l. 282)
I swear I am for those that have never been
mastered! (Section17, l. 288)
I swear I am for those who walk abreast with
America and with the earth! (Section 17, l. 291)
I swear I will not be outfaced by irrational things! (Section 17, l. 293)
[Line reference is to Variorum, text from Leaves of Grass 1856]

The effect is to fashion a strong framework of assertion and assertive pleading on which the 1856 text's finale is built. The considerable additions in the final section have obscured this defining framework, as has the tinkering Whitman engaged in with the lines themselves: in the case of lines 267, 288, 291 and 293 the "I swear" becomes "I am", and the "I swear I dare not" of line 282 becomes "I dare not" in 1871. Particular damage is done to the cluster of lines 288-293. Pared back to its initial form this is an appropriate flourish for a poem which has engaged with mind-cure issues. Mind-cure texts of all types sought to encourage their readers to learn to activate positive thoughts and all indulged in verbal wordplay to achieve this end. Sometimes this consisted of learning to utilise "will" instead of "shall" in referring to intended actions (thus exercising the WILL power necessary). At other times it consisted of making sure statements of intent were framed using powerful declarative or agentive verbs such as "I dedicate" or "I commit".

When considered in this light "I swear" is interesting. As noted it is a continuation of Whitman's insistent tone to his reader, begun in section fifteen, that he, the poet, can honestly see just what he wishes the reader to see. As a performative verb it has the merit of acting as a vow or dedication of purpose, indeed as a pledge. A cursory

glance at the opening seven lines of section eighteen confirms that the purpose of "I swear" is further enhanced by the emphatic roll-call of "I will's."

There are, however, moments in the final section where the stridency of the declaration evokes a response in the reader akin to that of Betsy Erkkila who describes the tone of one part of the final section as "rhetorical insistence on a lesson of self mastery (there) betrays his growing fear of dissolution". At times there is indeed a "barely concealed hysteria"[63] in the language. This is particularly evident in the following passage:

> I swear I will not be outfaced by irrational things!
> I will penetrate what it is in them that is sarcastic
> upon me!
> I will make cities and civilisation defer to me!
> I will confront these shows of the day and night!
> I will know if I am to be less that they!
> I will see if am not as majestic as they![64]

Here the conception of a world filled with "irrational things" suggests a self failing to make sense of the world and reduced to challenging a world that he can only label "irrational". There is an aching powerlessness behind the claim that whole civilisations must 'defer' to the speaker. Even the nominalising of what must be confronted as a 'they' is a symptom of a mind in distress. Erkkila continues with the accusation that in this section Whitman "faces but does not resolve" social problems and continues with the harsh contention that, "in the 1856 version the bard of Democracy appears to have lost his direction."[65]

In focusing on the passage she has chosen, Erkkila has correctly identified one of the extreme claims made by mind-cure for the powers of mind: the ability to outface

and control events through thought alone. She has coupled her reaction to what is a rhetorical flourish with the contention that such rhetoric necessarily involves an evasion of social commentary and social critique. Since neither she nor any other scholar has traced the complexity of the 1856 "Poem of Many In One" they have not been able to appreciate that mind-cure was of both interest and use to a Whitman still experimenting with his voice and constructing his poetic in two crucial ways. Firstly, it "talked" directly to its adherents about selfhood and how to enhance, strengthen and bolster their self-esteem, an area of interest to Whitman, and surely one inviting social commentary and critique: Whitman wished to "persuade his delicious pay." However there is, arguably, a second line of interest for Whitman. The young poet was extremely interested in promoting, encouraging and, indeed, defending individuality. Even in the bravado flourish that I have proposed as a reading for the section of the poem from section fourteen to the end there is a key passage of extreme importance in revealing Whitman's wide-eyed appraisal of the mind therapy involved in mind-cure:

> I swear I am for those that have never been
> mastered!
> For men and women whose tempers have never
> been mastered!
> For those whom laws, theories, conventions, can
> never master![66]

Whitman is borrowing and exploring mind-cure discourse, with its alluring promises, and setting up a self-dramatising master class for his readers, but does so with one very careful eye. That eye is focused on the possibility that mind-cure as a mental therapy may seek to master the individual rather than empower him or her.

There is general agreement that "Song of the Open Road" is a poem of some significance. Critics, however, place a different emphasis on which key concepts in relation to his role as a poet Whitman is seen to be sharing with the reader in the poem. For instance the claim in *Walt Whitman: An Encyclopedia* is that the poem contains a "rousing call to freedom" and a "dynamic persona who is at once the poem's subject and the spokesman for Whitman's exuberant gospel of hope."[67] On the other hand, for John Burroughs it is one of Whitman's "great poems" with "out–flashings, out–rushings of the pent-up flames of the poet's soul."[68] Between the summary provided by *Walt Whitman: An Encyclopedia* and the much earlier, more exuberant praise from Burroughs there have been many other large claims made for the poem.[69]

A number of these treatments of the poem have begun to suggest a deeper, perhaps darker, purpose lying beneath Whitman's surface exuberant air of care – free enthusiasm. Such learned interpretations have begun to replace the judgement of Gay Wilson Allan that the poem is a, "carefree, light-hearted... universal vision of joy and brotherhood."[70] I wish to develop an analysis of the poem which will

continue down the path trodden by such revisionist critics. As previously, I will explore Whitman's offer to the reader to share intimate knowledge concerning the healing and restorative power of the mind.

I will consider the poem as an offer of mental hope, a text in which Whitman is articulating truths and challenges which attend the successful completion of a state of readiness to accept insights concerning truths about mental powers which offer to ease cultural pain.

My analysis will, of necessity, be in two parts, linguistic and then cultural. The first task is to demonstrate clearly a level of linguistic and formal complexity in the poem. This is necessary for the same reason as in my previous analysis of "Poem of Many In One". The true complexity of both poems can only be established when careful exposition of their formal complexity and linguistic subtlety prevents them being viewed as merely repositories of key concepts.

The second part of my task is to consider the discourse Whitman employs in the poem in the context of those available to him in the culture of his own times. This will involve an examination of popularised phrenology in the form of *The American Phrenological Journal*, and advice literature related to controlling and disciplining the mind from The Fowler and Wells publishing house. I will be exploring Whitman's repositioning of these phrenological discourses in order to create for himself a more democratic and humanitarian discourse.

As previously, I shall use the pioneering approach of Harold Aspiz as a starting point. His careful close analysis of Whitman's texts combined with positioning of those texts in their cultural context, found in *Whitman and the Body Beautiful,* is again evident in a much later article on "Poem of the Road".[71]

Aspiz, in his opening comments, is quite clear about the deeply serious nature of Whitman's intention in the poem:

> (to open) one-self to the cosmic influences that pervade nature's realm is itself the open road to spiritual growth, self-discovery, and the empowerment to inspire others.[72]

He is, also, quite clear in outlining his preference for the 1856 edition of the poem:

> In arbitrarily dividing the poem into 15 numbered sections in 1867, Whitman did not necessarily clarify the poem's original structure, in which the stress falls on the characteristically short, often apothegmatic, verse paragraphs which are the poem's essential building blocks. And his revisions also tended to soften the poem's original *dramatic impact*. Therefore, this essay follows the attractive 1856 text.[73] [emphasis added]

I wish to examine, initially, each of the moments that Aspiz identifies as carrying dramatic impact within the first section of the poem (sections 1-5 of 1867 text) to suggest that each involves dramatic enactment, through Whitman's demonstrating to the listener what is involved for them, in mental terms, as "voyagers" on a journey towards growth and empowerment.

First I would like to examine the very opening of the first section which is not a part of the poem Aspiz focuses on in detail. Aspiz does consider the nature of the "delicious burdens"[74] of verse four and comments on the exuberance that

dramatically open the poem – "afoot and light hearted … I ask not good-fortune … strong and content, I travel the open road."[75] I suggest, however, it is the dramatic tension provided by the counterpoint of the opening enthusiasm measured against the check provided by "still here I carry my old delicious burdens"[76] which is, in fact, the first dramatic event of the poem.

With the two words, 'Still here', Whitman repositions the listener and his own wandering spirit. 'Still' suggests a range of cautionary notes. The sense of 'no matter that' or 'even if that is possible', indicates matters to be addressed before the future joys of flight and release, which are being promised , are possible. There may, also, be a sense of a visionary escape that may have proved, in the past, to be negated by certain forces, perhaps those to be revealed in the next four lines. 'Here' is challenging and demands attention. One referent is 'the earth' indicated in the previous verse with the suggestion of a context within Nature which leads to consideration of metaphysics ("I do not want the constellations any nearer"). Another possible referent is a clarification and narrowing of the earth-bound context in the form of the persona's temporal and social context, one where he has responsibility for other social beings' well-being.

The latter referent is further suggested by the very gradual unfolding in the next three lines of indications that begin to clarify what 'them' in "I carry them" refers to. Initially 'they' are "my old delicious burdens" which, we are informed, the poet carries wherever he goes, which he can't get rid of which he is filled with and "will fill in return".[77]

The possibility of the line "men and women" having two separate meanings adds further complexities. If his phrase is vocative and Whitman is addressing his listeners, albeit formally, then Whitman is informing his listeners about the burdens, as already indicated. However, if he is, simultaneously, including 'men and women' in his descriptive list outlining just what his burden consists of, then men and women are his old ('still') omnipresent burden which he can't shake off and which he will "fill in return".

So Whitman can be considered to draw breath via this counterpoint to remind himself and the listener that they both share an omnipresent burden as social beings in relation to others. Two matters demand further attention. Why are they, the men and women, and the burdens Whitman and they share, "delicious"? How can Whitman be 'filled' with men and women/burdens in such way as being able to fill them in return?

I believe further investigation of the poem will establish that this dramatic, quite tortured, self-scrutiny, operating as a check on the opening visionary promise, only makes sense when further markers in the poem, often at moments identified by Aspiz as dramatic, are seen as Whitman carrying the burden of others' doubt and uncertainty of their individual worth – he will literally take on the burden of their thoughts. He will, through the mental inspiration poetry can afford, "fill" them with the gospel of mental health.

There is an interesting bench mark of Whitman's serious intent 'buried' beneath the apparently wearied "I swear it is impossible for me to get rid of them". C Carroll

Hollis[78] has noted the importance of the shall/will distinction in the poem and the emphatic use of 'will' makes its first impact here to link up with the declarative 'swear' and provide dramatic impact.

There are clear indications of the power of thought in the first section scrutinised by Aspiz for dramatic impact:

> I think I could stop here myself, and do miracles...
> From this hour, I ordain myself loosed of limits
> and imaginary lines!
> Going where I list – my own master, total
> and absolute... [79]

Aspiz says of the above that the persona's 'awareness of ... higher consciousness... comes to him as an exaltation, an epiphany'.[80]

However, I wish to consider the full verse paragraph from which Aspiz selected these lines for comment:

> I think heroic deeds were all conceived in the open air
> I think I could stop here myself, and do miracles,
> I think whatever I meet on the road I shall like,
> and whatever beholds me shall like me,
> I think whoever I see must be happy.
>
> From this hour, freedom!
> From this hour, I ordain myself loosed of limits
> and imaginary lines!
> Going where I list – my own master, total
> and absolute. [81]

Prior to examining this section of the poem it is important to examine a pair of key revisions Whitman made in the poem post 1856 which prepare the reader for the importance of the sequence of 'I thinks' above.

The death-bed edition has the line:

> I believe you are latent with unseen existences, you are so dear to me.[82]

Up to and including the 1871 edition the line read thus:

> I think you are latent with curious existences, you are so dear to me.[83]

Again in the same section a line reads in the death-bed edition:

> From the living and the dead I believe you have peopled your impassive surfaces[84]

Up to and including the 1871 edition it read thus:

> From the living and the dead I think you have peopled your impassive surfaces.....[85]

What is being trailed here with the insertion of 'I think' in these lines is the foregrounding within the section 'I think heroic deeds', of the presence of thought within the epiphanic moment. The change from 'I believe' to 'I think' is from passive acceptance of a known truth to active participation in a living thought. The full implications of the epiphanic moment containing living active thought unfold as the lines commencing with 'I think' follow one after each other.

At one level 'I think' registers, with deceptive casualness, an accumulative list of discoveries intergral to what constitutes the epiphany. However, the verse promises more than a series of opinions that are recorded at their moment of birth within the drama of the poem. \the series provides, in addition, a dramatic enactment of the power of thought itself.

If we examine the first line it can be seen as an insight into knowledge concerning where great deeds originate from, where their birth or conception lies. However, if we focus on the other meaning of 'conception' that is conceivable[pun intended], that of the particular birth of ideas, then a fuller resonance of 'I think' comes into play. Whitman, with deceptive casualness, is sharing with us his own thought that all heroism in life originally derives from thought. He is also hinting that there is a certain climate conducive to the birth of such thought – 'the open air'.

Line two of the verse indicates the power that follows from such a realisation – "I could stop here, myself and do miracles". The word 'here' is of crucial importance. In his analysis Aspiz addresses the problem of the anaphoric lines which bind together sections six and eight:

> Here is space....,
> Here is the test of wisdom....,
> Here is realisation.....,
> Here is adhesiveness....,
> Here is the efflux of the soul.....[86]

He asks, "where however is the persona's 'Here'?"[87] His suggestion is that "Whitman here chiefly projects nature as an extension of the self" and claims "all of Whitman's journeys are said to be *mental* journeys" [emphasis added].

He summarises the matter thus:

> And the locus of the poem, its centre or "here" would appear to be the poet's expanding consciousness.[88]

The particular nature of the context in which this consciousness expands, and the potential usages of the thought processes involved, becomes clearer in the lines which follow the first triumphant declaration. The persona indicates he "could stop here" at the place/moment when the self realises what the previous line has already announced, i.e. that all actions originate in thought. Armed with this insight into the power of thought itself he could achieve "miracles".

The remaining two lines of the verse, moreover, shape, for us, the reason why the persona uses the modality "could" in line two. His mission, it is revealed, armed with the insight as to the power of thought, is to share thought with others, pass on its powers, so as to achieve, as Aspiz indicates, "empowerment to inspire others".[89] The situation the poem addresses is one where others are filled with the burden of thought and sharing this insight as to thought's power may fill them with new found confidence.

There is one more line that, in similar fashion to these two, ensures that the intensity of the situation has to be acknowledged- the climactic last line. This remained unchanged through to the death-bed edition but the same is not true of the previous, penultimate, line. The 1856 text is as quoted previously:

> I think whatever I meet on the road I shall like,
> and whatever beholds me shall like me.

The 1860 text is:

> Whatever I meet on the road I shall like, and
> Whoever beholds me shall like me.[90]

There is a gradual replacement of 'whatever' with 'whoever' in consecutive editions of the poem. This is to diminish gradually the dramatic enactment of the power of thought to arm the persona and those he 'meets'. What is being gradually lost is the promise of being able to meet anything that life throws at you on life's path.

In the line which follows, dropped in 1876, Whitman immediately shares the exuberant liberation that is the outcome of this insight as to the power of thought:

> From this hour freedom!
> From this hour I ordain myself...
> ...my own master[91]

Aspiz perceptively describes this joyous outburst as indicating a launching on a "journey of self-liberation, self-invention and self-validation". His analysis of the next verse in the poem, which brings the first section (as identified by him) to a close is instructive. He correctly identifies Whitman's dramatised mystic state but 'grounds' this by reminding us that:

> the secrets revealed are rooted in Whitman's own beliefs and stem in large part from the popular reformist doctrine of the day. His vision of 'perfect men and women recalls his programmatic poems, which envision successive generations of democratic individuals steadily improving themselves and breeding out imperfections in their posterity. Similarly 'the secret' of living 'in the open air was a popular cause. Whitman was, after all, a city dweller, whose journalism in the 1840's and 1850's advocated fresh air, clean water

> and living with the earth, or what medical pseudo scientists sometimes labelled ventupathy, hydropathy, and terrapathy[92]

I suggest this is an accurate account of the influence of certain pseudo-sciences on Whitman but neglects the crucial influence of mind therapy and popularised phrenology in particular.

As I have indicated, key dramatic moments in the poem up to the end of section four contain dramatised reflections on thought as a burden and on the possible liberation positive thought can bring. In the very last verse of the first section Whitman announces that whoever accepts him will be 'blessed' (this links to a theme trailed earlier in "I ordain myself"). This blessing, it is claimed, will be achieved through the persona "toss(ing) a new gladness and roughness among them."[93]

I wish to focus on this line and examine the last dramatic moment of the section to suggest that it pulls together the sequence of dramas concerning thought in a most impressive and skilful manner, using references that can be linked to self-help mind therapeutics of the time. Aspiz considers the line, but it is significant that, despite his previously expressed intentions, he fails to quote the 1856 edition. He cites the post- 1871 version which reads thus:

> I will toss a new gladness and roughness among them[94]

The 1856 version has 'the' instead of 'a'. This is crucial because the 'the' refers to the previously enacted exemplum in the poem concerning thought, where picking up the burden of thought in others, and, in turn, replacing these thoughts with the power of positive thought, are actions shared with the listener.

I suggest this 'freedom of thought' being celebrated consists of rejecting conventional dogma by conceiving such beliefs as restraints:

> Gently, but with undeniable will, divesting myself of the holds that would hold me.[95]

If 'the' in "the new gladness" is anaphoric, Whitman's persona is referring to his rejection of conventional belief and his discovery of the power of liberated and liberating thought, which is a 'breath of fresh air' to him.

Furthermore, I suggest that the "apathogemic verse paragraphs" (Aspiz's phrase), i.e.,

> I inhale....
> I am larger....
> All seem beautiful to me.[96]

are the most immediate anaphoric referents of the "new gladness and roughness". They are 'rough' in the sense that they are not well-known philosophical beliefs or dogmas, but pithy, short, apparently newly-hewn, short statements of revitalising 'gladness'. They are offered to the wearied self whose presence will become more evident later in the poem.

Not the least of Aspiz's insights is the observation that these maxims are, in shape and content, the 'building blocks' of the poem. They are also the building blocks of self help mind-cure books as they emerged in America through the 1850's and on into the 1880's and 1890's. There are many similar examples that must have been known to Whitman as they came from the publishing house of Fowler and Wells which he had close contacts with.[97] They are found in works written by Fowler, in

evangelical self-help books published by them, and in *The American Phrenological Journal* edited by the partners.

A few key selections from contemporary populist works will indicate how the power of the mind on life's path features in a manner similar to Whitman's.

Regularly in the January of each year *The American Phrenological Journal* laid out its aims and mission. This, from January 1853, is typical of its claim to point to a path of mental health and happiness:

> Our chosen mode of ministering to the happiness of those for whom our good wishes are entertained, is by disseminating truth through the pages of *The Phrenological Journal.* This work aims to show man how to be happy, by developing the laws of health, and making the *paths so plain* that the common, the uneducated mind may find and follow it. It also opens to demonstrative inspection the complicated elements and workings of the mind, and by thus teaching man the highest laws of his being, we open him to the secret... [98] [added emphasis]

In one of his very successful instruction books Fowler declares most emphatically:

> Brain cannot be bought. No royal road to these greatest ends exists but exercise – a road open to all.[99]

Next, the Reverend G S Weaver, a most prolific author for Fowler and Wells, who in his advice book for the young addresses them thus:

> I come before you my young friends with a most reasonable thought, the first which should engage your attention. The thought out of which is to spring your after lives. The need-thought of your coming usefulness. May I plant it? Will you lend me your ears to receive it?... Minds to deposit it..... bear rich fruit of beautifully happy lives?[100]

Finally in his volume *Ways of Life*, in a chapter entitled "The Actual and the Possible", Weaver points clearly to the ability of the exercised and energised mind to help his audience glimpse their potential:

> One cause of this low life is men's unconsciousness of their capacities. They know not the possibilities that are in them; they dream what they might be... We ought to believe that we can be what we wish to be. Our faith should be a mighty power within us... The wise, active, and energetic exercise of the mental powers will give it... The men in humble walks may rise in dignity and importance by the magic power they possess. Mind is a thing of progress. Use it, and it will grow for ever. Exert it strongly and wisely and it will soon stand among the sons of light.....[101]

To return to the key moment in Whitman's poem, as he strides out on his "open road: it is worth examining the verb which Whitman chooses to indicate to us the method of distribution of the 'new gladness' which he, Fowler and Weaver dispense. It is 'toss'. One obvious trope in play here is that of sight, with toss suggestive of a glance passing, perhaps suggestively, from persona to recipient, and vice versa. In terms of thought, its dissemination and the intentions of he who is offering it to others, it has other implications. It implies a liberality in the giver as well as a provision of that which is light, but not lacking in substance. This is ideal to suggest a gladness which will not necessitate the receiver ploughing through dogma encoded in weighty complex books or articles. It also redirects us to the form of the apothegms.

Whitman scholarship has begun to identify those passages in the Notebooks, belonging to the period leading up to 1855 or 1856, which can be considered as trial runs for themes which emerge in the first two editions of *Leaves of Grass*. An examination of some of these will establish the presence of a range of themes

relevant to the issues being discussed: the open road theme, the tutelage of a disciple theme, the consideration of the power of thought theme. Edward Grier suggests, in his editorial role, some of the notebook ruminations which can be linked to sections in "Song of the Road".[102] In the light of Grier's crucial insight that in Notebook 80 Whitman's "I" operates as a teacher and healer, that particular notebook deserves attention.

A number of the key moments in Notebook 80 do, indeed, illuminate the importance of the open road theme:

> But I will take each man and woman of you to the window
> And open the shutters and the sash, and my left arm shall
> Hook you round the waist and my right shall point you to
> The endless and beginningless road up along[103]

Later in the same notebook Whitman further defines the significance of the road on which he encourages us to travel:

> I will not be a great philosopher, and found any school, and build it with iron players, and gather the young men around me, and make them my disciples that new superior churches and politics shall come – but I will open the shutters and the sash and hook my left arm around your waist till I point you to the road along which are the cities of all living philosophy and pleasure – not I – nor God – can travel this road for you - It is not far it is within the stretch of your thumb; perhaps you shall find you are on it already and did not know – Perhaps you shall find it everywhere over the ocean and over the land, when once you have the vision to behold it. [104]

This reconfirms the significance of the road as a voyage to knowledge and happiness but it also teases with the notion that the right state of mind is nearer than one thinks. The suggestion is of your own thoughts being close, in contrast to distant philosophies one might venture forth to assimilate. The taunting and enigmatic

'within the stretch of your thumb' may allude to the turning of the page, Whitman's page.

In this same notebook we also find:

> These are the thoughts of all men in all ages and lands – they are not original with me – they are mine – they are ours just the same - If these thoughts are not for all they are for nothing. If they do not enclose everything they are for nothing. If they are not the *school of all things physical, moral, and mental* they are nothing. [emphasis added][105]

The last two lines, containing as they do a paean to the power of thought, are of great significance to the issues raised about mental therapeutics in the present study. They show Whitman is aware of, and considering the implications of, the power of thought to act as instruction concerning how to live and how to think; a blueprint for a poetic of mental therapeutics.

Aspiz's analysis of the middle section of the poem (sections nine to fifteen) is a considered one and clearly identifies how Whitman celebrates the intuition of higher laws, the penetration of concealed mysteries and how he does so with the command "Allons!". Of equal interest is his insistence on 'potentially disruptive' verse paragraphs and his explanation that these are due to Whitman's awareness of ugliness and corruption in contemporary American life.

Where my analysis has a different emphasis to that of Aspiz is in moving beyond seeing only a "hopeful vision" constructed as a reaction to this "ugliness and corruption and the circumscribed lives that Whitman knew so well."[106] My analysis

insists on the recurrent presence in the poem of the dramatisation of issues related to thought. It is possible to demonstrate Whitman's appreciation that the very conformity Aspiz speaks of can operate precisely in the area of thought – and that in opposition to this it was possible for Whitman to conceive that through thought his social contemporaries might be liberated.

Aspiz suggests that the section beginning,

> To look up or down no road but it stretches and waits for
> you, however long, but it stretches and waits for you!
> To see no being, not God or any, but you also go thither....
> To know the universe itself as a road – as many roads – as roads for
> travelling souls,[107]

is dramatic evidence that those addressed in the poem can, "overcome weaknesses and aspire to personal fulfilment," and that it speaks lyrically of the proposal that, "life's supreme adventure is to extract the joy and spiritual nourishment from whatever one comes in contact with."

I wish to suggest that Whitman is including in this "extraction" the provision and uptake of a more nourishing view of mind and thought than that of the 'stale' philosophies he saw as circumscribing his contemporaries. This is shown, firstly, in the key sentence of the verse paragraph which culminates in "to know the universe itself as a road":

> To gather the minds of men out of their brains as you
> encounter them!
> To gather the love out of their hearts!

Aspiz rightly considers this affirmation as a "paean to life". However, he and other critics have focused on the sexual and sexual–political implication of the line following, "To take your own lovers on the road with you, for all, that you leave them behind you!" to the exclusion of the crucial emphasis on "mind-gathering" in the antecedent line, thus ignoring the importance of that line's linkage to the first section of the poem. Aspiz does however begin to glimpse this vital connection with his comment:

> The paradox of taking one's 'lovers on the road with you, for all that you leave them behind you!' recapitulates the persona's carrying his 'old delicious burdens.... men and women' with him wherever he goes on his mental journey,[108]

He does not, however, develop this insight into an appreciation that the journey is about mental powers and not just a "mental journey".

The 'Allons' of this section are a fierce rallying cry to action, borrowing from the cry of liberation in *The Marseillaise,* insisting on the fulfilment of the self. None more so than the following:

> Allons! out of the dark confinement!
> It is useless to protest – I know all, and expose it.[109]

The second line is very clear with the persona claiming he has suffered similar privations and that this knowledge empowers him – in modern terms he has empathy.[110]

However, the 'dark confinement' is a phrase that needs careful consideration and has not been given careful scrutiny by critics. Whitman provides a clue to the implications of the phrase when he quickly claims, in the lines that follow, to be able to 'expose it'. This suggests bringing that which is in the dark out to the light. It also suggests that what is in the dark and to be feared can, once faced, be challenged. It is extremely important that other lines help unpack the meaning of the 'dark confinement' by suggesting thoughts which are 'dark'. The line "Behold a secret, silent loathing and despair!"[111] is suggestive of thoughts about the self which lie beneath the social persona one is forced to exhibit, and which is glimpsed in the line "Inside of dresses and ornaments, inside of those/ washed and trimmed faces."[112]

I suggest at this point in the poem Whitman reaffirms, through a consideration of the darkness of thoughts, the possibility of mental release. The lines,

> ...speaking not a
> syllable of itself
> Speaking of anything else, but never of itself,[113]

are thus the final indication of the 'dark confinement', a place where thoughts are kept within and the self never articulates what is so important, the positive thoughts that lie within.

Aspiz and many other critics have commented on the 'passionate persuasion' of the finale, even on some occasions finding it strident. Aspiz's final summary is that the poem in its 1856 form is "a triumph of creative exuberance, profound sympathies and self-portraiture".[114]

I have sought to establish that the identification of an extension to the reader of profound sympathy is accurate but that its operation with reference to mind problems is central to the complexity of the poem. In addition the form and dynamic of the poem is such as to dramatise Whitman's insight to the negative thought processes his contemporaries manifested. Whitman is bold enough, I suggest, to indicate the liberation possible through daring to think positively about the self in such difficult circumstances.

I have indicated in addition that the foregrounding of examples of such therapeutic thought patterns in the core of the poem produced apothegmic statements. These resemble very closely elements of mind-cure discourse. Aspiz quite correctly defends Whitman from the judgement that his poem is 'strident', reminding us that Whitman is borrowing from a culture containing discourse such as the sermon, where "exhortation was a popular literary form".[115]

In the examples used earlier from Weaver, the Fowlers and *The American Phrenological Journal,* a tone of earnest exhortation even more relevant than that of the sermon, is evident. It is to a much closer analysis of the complex relationship between Whitman's exuberant exhortation and the tone and moral stridency of such texts that we must turn, to more fully understand the humane and passionate sympathy in relation to the powers of the mind, that is the key note of "Poem of the Road".

Notes: All references to "By Blue Ontario's Shore" and "Song of Myself" are from Scully Bradley, Harold W. Blodgett, Arthur Golden, and William White, eds., *Leaves of Grass; A Textual Variorum*, 3 Vols. (New York: New York University Press,1980) and are cited by volume, page and line. Henceforth, Variorum.

All references to "Poem of Many In One" and "Poem of the Road" are from *Major Authors on CD-Rom: Walt Whitman: Facsimile of Leaves of Grass, Brooklyn, New York, 1856* (Research Publications Inc., 1982) and are cited by page and line. Henceforth, Leaves of Grass 1856.

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[1] Harold W. Blodgett and Scully Bradley, eds., *Leaves of Grass, Reader's Edition* (London: London University Press, 1965), n., p.340. Henceforth, Blodgett.
[2] J.R. LeMaster and Donald J. Kummings, eds., *Walt Whitman, An Encyclopedia* (New York and London: Garland Publishing, 1998), p.91.
[3] M. Wynn Thomas, *The Lunar Light of Whitman's Poetry* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard UP, 1987), p. 259.
[4] Gay Wilson Allen, *The New Walt Whitman Handbook* (New York: New York University Press, 1975), p.125.
[5] Ibid.
[6] Thomas, *Lunar Light*, p.259.
[77] These include J. E. Miller, *Leaves of Grass of Grass: American Lyric, Epic of Self and Democracy* (Twayne: McMillan, 1992) who stresses the necessary, often painful, relation of the poet to his time and Whitman's strategy of shock in claiming, in the poem, to 'plunge his seminal muscle into his times'; Stephen Black, *Whitman's Journey into Chaos: A Psychoanalytical Study of The Poetic Process* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975) who emphasises the element of 'disobedience' in the poem and Whitman's need for 'positive thinking' to achieve relief from cultural/psychological anxiety in a manner that carries 'more forceful poetic statement than that of the Preface'; and Betsy Erkkila, *Whitman the Political Poet* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989) who configures the poem as a study of the difficulties of political self mastery as Whitman 'barely conceals the hysteria that self and world might be coming apart at the seams.'
[8] Harold Aspiz, *Walt Whitman and the Body Beautiful* (Urbana:University of Illinois Press,1980).
[9] Ibid., p.117.
[10] David Reynolds, *Walt Whitman's America: A Cultural Biography* (New York: Vintage Books, 1996), p.359.
[11] Rev. G. S. Weaver, *Hopes and Helps for The Young of Both Sexes Relating to the Formation Character, Choice of Avocation, Health, Moral Sentiment, Social Affection, Courtship and Marriage* (New York: Fowler and Wells, 1853), pp. 43, 171.
[12] Variorum I, p.2, l.30.
[13] Edwin Havilland Miller, *Walt Whitman's 'Song of Myself' A Mosaic of Interpretations* (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1989), p.54.
[14] I suggest that this challenge leads neatly on to the "attack on acquisitive man," which Miller cites as M.W.Thomas's reading of 3.30-35.
[15] The formula of a tantalising key question posed at the foot of a page and answered at the top of the following page is found here and at key moments in "Song of Myself," 1855. The effectiveness of such a device requires further attention. In "Poem of Many in One," I suggest it helps foreground and dramatise a key theme.
[16] All references to "Poem of Many in One" are from *Major Authors on CD-Rom: Walt Whitman, Facsimile of 'Leaves of Grass'* (Woodbridge, CT: Research Publications, Inc., 1982), henceforth Major Authors.
[17] Variorum I, p. 198 l.8-9.
[18] Gary A. Colbert, "Whitman's Revisions of 'By Blue Ontario's Shore'", *Walt Whitman Quarterly Review* 23 (1977) 35-45: and Willie T. Weathers, "Whitman's Poetic Translations of his 1855 Preface", *American Literature* 19 (147-8), 21-40.
[19] Colbert, p.35.
[20]In his opening paragraphs Colbert does allude to the 1856 text being drawn from the Preface material, but does so in a patronising manner, "one is perhaps justified in scoffing at such a method of making poetry."(p.36). Only after 1856 does he see the poem as "revised to a quite subtle and

complex poem" (ibid.). Section 11 is seen as the core of the poem and the deletion of two large passages from section 10 of the 1856 text is justified by these being merely "a definite tangent."
[21] I do not wish to underestimate the thematic analysis. Weathers provides a very astute synopsis (p. 23-24). I would suggest that one key theme, that of "the poet endowed with superlative vision," might be usefully extended to be formulated thus – endowed with spiritual vision and endowing within the poem superlative mental curative powers on his audience.
[22] Horace Traubel, *With Walt Whitman in Camden* (New York, 1915), II, pp. 310-11.
[23] Weathers, p.22.
[24] Ibid., p.23.
[25] Ibid., pp. 24-5.
[26] Ibid., p.22.
[27] Ibid., p.24. Weathers then repeats the assertion that "'Poem of Many in One' repeats the essential message of the Preface."
[28] Variorum I p. 190-211.
[29] Blodgett, p. 717-8.
[30] The paragraph beginning, "The messages of great poets to each man."
[31] Blodgett, p. 718, l.307-8.
[32] Ibid., p. 718, l. 309-14.
[33] Two examples: Firstly, from Ralph Waldo Trine, perhaps the most productive mind-cure author, writing at the end of the nineteenth and into the twentieth century:

> If you preserve your individuality then you become a master ... your influence and power will be an aid in bringing about a higher, a better, a more healthy set of conditions in the world. (Ralph Waldo Trine, *In Tune With The Infinite* (New York: Thomas Y. Cromwell Co., 1898), p.154).

Secondly, from the pen of Henry Wood, who very carefully described a practical method of mind-cure in a range of his books:

> Ideal Suggestion is the photography of pure and perfect ideals directly upon the mind through the medium of the sense of sight. It is voluntary and free from any admixture of personality or imperfection. By the cultivated vigour of thought-concentration it develops wonderful power and utility. (Henry Wood, *Ideal Suggestion Through Mental Photography* (Boston: Lee and Shepherd, 1893), p.7).

[34] Leaves of Grass 1856, p.187 l. 9.
[35] Ibid., p.183 l.12.
[36] Ibid., p. 184 l.1.
[37] Ibid., p. 186.
[38] Ibid., p.187 l. 9.
[39] Ibid. p.187 l. 1-7.
[40] Blodgett, p. 726, l. 585.
[41] Ibid., p. 726, l, 585-7.
[42] Leaves of Grass 1856, p. 188 l.8.
[43] Ibid., p.188 l. 12.
[44] Ibid., p.189 l. 12.
[45] M. Wynn Thomas, *Lunar Light* , passim. Thomas correctly identifies Whitman's defiant assertion that people must not be reduced to 'dots' and documents his attempt to reclaim a more positive vision of individualism than was current in the new emergent economic conditions.
[46] Leaves of Grass 1856, p.189 l. 2 and 4.
[47] Ibid., p.189 l.7-8.
[48] Ibid., p.190 l.3.
[49] The connection between Whitman's poetry and the luminist paintings of his era are explored in M. Wynn Thomas's *Lunar Light.*
[50] J. Perrin Warren, *Walt Whitman's Language Experiment* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1990).
[51] Leaves of Grass 1856, p. 191 l. 3.
[52] Donald Meyer, *The Positive Thinkers* (Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Co., 1965), pp.72-75. In a section entitled 'Dominion over Conscious Mind' Meyer describes the utilisation of Henry Wood's *Ideal Suggestion*:

> For restorative home use, Wood gave each of twenty-five pages in the first half of his book to one Ideal Suggestion printed in black bold letters; GOD IS HERE; I AM NOT BODY; THERE IS NO DEATH, etc., On the facing page a page-long meditation accompanied each

> ideal suggestion. Every day, the auto-patient was to retire to a private corner, relax in an easy chair, breathe deeply for several minutes, then "rivet the mind" upon the meditation through several readings.

He also explicates Charles Fillimore's method by selective quotation from the preface to Fillimore's basic text:

> These are not mere lectures, but lessons to be applied as one applies mathematical rules... When a suggestion is made to "hold a thought", ...the student should stop reading and, both audibly and mentally, do as bid. This will set up new thought-currents ... and make way for the spiritual illumination.

He also details Fillimore's assistance to his listeners after a lecture:

> At the end of each lecture Fillimore supplied statements to be used for "mental discipline.": I am the Christ of God... My perfection is now established in Divine Mind... My doubts and fears are dissolved and dissipated and I rest in confidence and peace in Thy Unchangeable Law. (Meyer's citation is from Charles Fillimore, *The Science of Being and Christian Healing* (Kansas City, Mo.: Unity School of Christianity, 1910), preface, pp. 27,82,98,127,138.)

Meyer concludes his observation of such practices, and the model of language use they reveal, with the comments, "Such eminence of the word in mind-cure was far from letting-go ...It was fixation, the maintenance of order, the deliberate drill imposed to restrain experience within prescribed formulas. One 'entered the silence' in order to be dominated. This was how mind affected body, how 'thoughts were things'".

[53] Leaves of Grass 1856, p.191 l. 8.

[54] See Blodgett p.204.where later variants are noted with the 1891 variant being " Justice, health, self-esteem." The personal is being supplanted by the judicial.

[55] Leaves of Grass 1856, p. 196 l. 1.

[56] Ibid., p 195, l. 7-8.

[57] Ibid., p.196, l. 2

[58] Ibid., p.196 l. 1

[59] Blodgett, p. 715, l. 216-21

[60] Leaves of Grass, 1856, p. 197.

[61] C. Carrol Hollis, *Language and Style in" Leaves of Grass"* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1983), p.108f.

[62] Leaves of Grass 1856, p.184 l. 8.

[63] Erkkila, p.138

[64] Leaves of Grass 1856, p.200 l.12-17.

[65] Erkkila, p 138.

[66] Leaves of Grass 1856, p. 200.

[67] J.R. LeMaster and Donald J. Kummings eds., *Walt Whitman, An Encyclopedia* (New York and London: Garland Publishing) p.663.

[68] John Burroughs, *Birds and Poets* (New York, 1891), pp. 135-6.

[69] Typical in this regard and indicative of how central the poem remains to contemporary work on Whitman is Stephen Jay Mack, "A Theory of Organic Democracy," in *A Companion to Walt Whitman*, ed., Donald M. Kummings (Malden Ma., Blackwell, 2006), pp. 139-141. Mack sees the poet in "Song of the Open Road" as:

> Embark(ing) on his own path of self-creation ...affirm(ing) the shaping value of all that is new ...find(ing) in nature both a warrant and a model for personal governance ...(a) process...not just personal but social as well.

[70] Gay Wilson Allen, *The New Walt Whitman Handbook* (New York: New York University Press, 1975) p.86.

[71] Harold Aspiz, "Walt Whitman's 'Poem of the Road'" *Walt Whitman Quarterly Review*, Vol. 12:3, Winter 95, pp. 170-185.

[72] Ibid., p.170.

[73] Ibid., p.171.

[74] Leaves of Grass 1856, p 223.

[75] Ibid., p.223

[76] Ibid., p 223.

[77] Ibid., p.223.

[78] C. Carrol Hollis, *Language and Style in Leaves of Grass,* p. 99f.

[79] Leaves of Grass 1856, p. 226, ll. 11-16

[80] Aspiz p.173.
[81] Leaves of Grass 156, p. 226, ll. 10-16
[82] Variorum I, p.227 l.29.
[83] Leaves of Grass 1856, p.225.
[84] Variorum I, P.227
[85] Leaves of Grass 1856, p.225.
[86] Ibid., p.229.
[87] Aspiz, p.174.
[88] Ibid., p.174
[89] Ibid., p.170.
[90] Variorum I, p.228, l.51 and note.
[91] Leaves of Grass 1856, p. 226, ll. 14-16
[92] Aspiz, pp. 173-4.
[93] Variorum I p.229, l. 67.
[94] Aspiz, p.173
[95] Variorum I p228, l. 57.
[96] These "building blocks" will work through several transformations until via. New Thought and Christian Science they finally form the self-hypnotic populist tracts of late 1880's mind-cure texts. Here all the individual has to do is to stare at such statements as 'I am strong' daily in order to gain mental strength.
[97] Whitman's connections to the publishing house are exhaustively examined in Madeleine Sterne, *Heads and Headliners: The Phrenological Fowlers* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1971).
[98] *The American Phrenological Journal* (New York, Fowler and Wells) Vol. XVII no.1 Jan 1853, p.1
[99] O. S. Fowler, *Memory and Intellectual Improvement Applied to Self-Education and Juvenile Instruction,* (New York: Fowler and Wells, 1857), p.121.
[100] Weaver, *Hopes and Helps for the Young of Both Sexes*, p.38.
[101] Rev. G. S. Weaver, *Ways of Life, Showing the Right Way and the Wrong Way, Contrasting the High Way and The Low Way and the Downward Way, the Way of Honor and the Way of Despair* (New York: Fowler and Wells, 1855), pp. 155, 156 (x3) and 157.
[102] Grier's notes, passim. In his analysis of the status of this particular notebook Grier makes a general observation which is pertinent to the present study – "The 'I' of the present notebook does not conspicuously relate itself to others except as teacher or healer."(p.55).
[103] Edward F. Grier, ed., *Notebooks and Unpublished Prose Manuscripts* (New York: New York University Press. 1984), Vol. I. p.63
[104] Ibid., p.66.
[105] Ibid., p.79.
[106] Aspiz, *Walt Whitman and The Body Beautiful,* p.178.
[107] Quoted in Aspiz, p.179.
[108] All quoted by Aspiz p.179.
[109] Leaves of Grass 1856, p. 237, ll. 8-9
[110] There is an obvious connection to recurrent motifs in "Song of Myself": 'I am he attesting sympathy' ; ' Agonies are one of my change of garments'; 'Behold I do not give lectures/ or a little charity' ; and perhaps of most relevance to the present study's concerns, ' acknowledge the duplicate of myself.../ every thought that flounders in me, the same flounders in them.' Variorum I, pp. 29, l. 461, 52, l. 844, 62, l. 994, 67, ll. 1080-82.
[111] Leaves of Grass 1856, p.237, l. 13
[112] Ibid., p. 237, l. 12
[113] Ibid., p238, ll. 5-6
[114] Aspiz, p.182.
[115] Ibid., p.182.

CHAPTER TWO

On the Road: Considering *The American Phrenological Journal*

This chapter continues the exploration of "Poem of the Road" as linked to mental therapeutics. It investigates the nature of the referent "here" in the poem. John Davies' research into Fowler's phrenology is extended to a detailed discussion of the particular discourse patterns within *The American Phrenological Journal.* Whitman is seen as both borrowing from Fowler's editorial stance and crafting a 'locus' within his poetic which rejects key aspects of the ideology of Fowler's phrenology. It is claimed that exposure to models in the Journal – dictatorial stance, dismissal of weakness, bravado promotion of self-esteem through material success and emphasis on dutiful compliance – provoked Whitman to construct an antithetical position in offering his mental succour.

As indicated in the previous chapter the prophetic and exhortative voice of the persona in "Poem of the Road" demands close attention in a number of respects. Firstly, as shown, the voice is of interest in its interaction with the reader, guiding him/her through a master class in the necessary actions to be considered in order to release the therapeutic potential within the mind. This interchange with the reader culminates in Whitman's "call of battle"[1] to join him on the open road liberated, through the power of positive thought, from a social life conceived of as one of imprisonment – "dark confinement"[2] and tortured secret

self-loathing – "behold a secret silent loathing and despair"[3]. The exhortation from the persona is to join him "here". As briefly indicated previously this locus is of some complexity. It refers to both an imagined social place and to the poem itself conceived of as a site for and source of considerable mental therapeutic power.[4]

It is important to scrutinise the individual examples of "here" within the poem to clarify the full range of reference that Whitman employs. Initially "here"[5] refers to the earth-bound burden-filled poet, his burden being his weary and heavily thought-filled contemporaries, men and women. He is carrying these "here" on the road in his own thoughts. As the poem is structured as an intimate sharing of thoughts with the reader "here" is, also, therefore, the poem itself, its early lines conceived of as the first steps on a road to mental healing.

The next example of "here," considered as a locus, is a place offering the "profound lesson of reception"[6], that all are accepted and dear to the poet. I suggest that again the reference is complex and dual – to a non-hierarchical imagined society permeated with tolerance and, simultaneously, to the poem as a thought-process where the necessary first stop on the road to such tolerance are, literally, thought through with the listener.

A little later in the poem, the persona playfully, but very purposefully, puns on the embracing power of the open air, linking it to the power of thought itself – "I think I could stop *here* myself and do miracles".[7] The locus of this "here" maintains the complexity of reference. It continues the suggestion of both the vital therapeutic power of the liberated self in the open air: able, firstly, to engender in himself a

positive view of all those he meets and, also, in equal measure, able to transfer such happiness to others; and, secondly, the suggestion of a poetry which goes, as thought can, when properly channelled, "where I list", in a masterful, liberating way.

Next, in a dramatised euphoric flourish, the persona proclaims that the thought nuggets he has at his disposal "here" – "I am larger than I thought" and "all seems beautiful to me"[8] –, rough and unsophisticated as they are, are, nevertheless prerequisites for the poet on his "road". Next the signal is given that Whitman demands the reader attends to this sequence; it is a clustered group of "here's," as the persona rolls out the loci one after another. In close succession, "here" is redefined and extended, as a place of "space", of "the test of wisdom", of "realisation" the place where "a man is tallied", as he "realises what he has in him".[9]

Such is the impetus of the rolling list of "here's" that verse paragraphs, not marked with "Here is" at their opening, still make sense as a declaration and definition of the locus being championed. When the persona announces that,

> Only the kernel of every object nourishes
> Where is he who… undoes stratagems for you and me?[10]

he is asserting that his poem and its frame of mind are "places" which do nourish in a direct way that all other conventional poems are unable to do and that only he will "undo stratagems".[11]

In the next four verse paragraphs[12], which lead up to the initial cry of "Allons/ Whoever you are come travel with me", the persona details three more aspects of the locus of "here". These are "adhesiveness", "the efflux of the soul" as "happiness" and "the fluid and attaching character that is the sweetness of man and woman". We are approaching the central key section of the poem in these verse paragraphs as it is now that the pursuit of happiness through the powers of the mind comes fully into focus, aided by the accumulated resonance of "here."

I now wish to turn to a second crucial aspect of the persona's voice, its cultural resonance, and suggest the complexity of Whitman's links to those other voices in the America of 1850 which sought to minister to perceived cultural anxieties and to address the issue of happiness through advocacy of the power of mind, and in so ministering sharing common purpose and motive with the persona of Whitman's poem. My particular focus will be on the variety of pseudo-scientific discourses available to Whitman and others through the publishing exploits of Fowler and Wells and in particular self-help material contained in that firm's *American Phrenological Journal.*

The entries for "Phrenology", "Popular Culture", and "Pseudo Science" in *Walt Whitman: an Encyclopaedia* fully document the established importance of Fowler and Wells in providing Whitman with pseudo-scientific issues which influenced his conception of himself as poet with his health-giving task.[13] These entries begin to document, via contemporary sources, the general insight of Gay Wilson Allen, in his *New Walt Whitman Handbook:*

> Pseudo-science furnished Whitman a picture of a balanced harmonious life.... Phrenology left him with a vigorous hope for himself and for his native land. It was part and parcel of the gospel of "healthy-mindedness".[14]

However, only in the work of John D Davies in *Phrenology: Fad and Science: a 19th-Century Crusade* is there, till now, a concerted attempt to study phrenology's cultural importance and to do so, in part, through detailed study of the *American Phrenological Journal*, published by Fowler and Wells.[15] Through this approach Davies is able to place the Fowlers as commercial purveyors of important cultural therapies. They are seen to popularise a phrenology of which the following can be claimed:

> It is difficult to exaggerate the quasi-religious significance physiological laws assumed in the true phrenologists' eyes.[16]

Davies is never blind to their commercialism but does not, as might be the temptation, see this as precluding the motive on their part of honest social reform,

> Nevertheless underlying this commercialism was a sincere belief in the need for reform.[17]

He sees the spreading of the phrenological gospel as intimately linked to important "self culture" and "self-improvement" discourses of the time:

> Like Unitarianism, Universalism, and Transcendentalism, Phrenology taught that sobriety and virtue, chastity and self-improvement were the keys to the good life. The musty earnestness of its books preached self-culture and self-improvement to such a degree that they read like parodies of Dale Carnegie.[18]

Most important to this study and its concerns, he is sympathetic to the healing powers of phrenology as it,

> inspired courage and hope in those who were depressed by the consciousness of some inability .... every dangerous power in us may be restrained and guided as to be a source of good.[19]

and echoes this sentiment by claiming that phrenology as revealed in *The American Phrenological Journal* can be seen as:

> This humane and engaging faith ... by inspiring hope in those conscious of their own deficiencies it thus was a vehicle of optimism.[20]

Arthur Wrobel has convincingly demonstrated Whitman's debt to phrenological ideas in the construction of "his own synthesis of materialism and spiritualism".[21] He has also usefully described the social, cultural and therapeutic appeal of pseudo-science in Whitman's time:

> The premise of an intimate relationship between the human world and nature's eternal processes offered the hope that a new social order and *unlimited personal improvement could be lawfully engineered...* [emphasis added] [22]
> ...Ordinary people with reasons less grandiose but no less compelling listened attentively. They wished to know about the laws governing their own constitutions, to reach beyond the merely Temporal and establish connection with the eternal, or simply to improve their lives by realising greater health and the full use of their innate faculties.[23]

Wrobel also mounts a strong defence of the pseudo-sciences of Whitman's time. He defends them from the criticism that the "hopes" they articulate are facile constructions achieved by the simple process of collapsing the spiritual and physical together in a reductive unity which then generates a whole range of homogeneous health reforms. His counter argument is that they have something more than just "mere visionary hopes" to offer:

> Though the hopes these pseudo-sciences raised appear misguidedly extravagant, they were not atypical. In collapsing the spiritual and physical into a unity, these pseudo-sciences came to resemble any number of health reform movements, except for one important difference: they *appeared to offer corroborative inductive support, not mere visionary hopes*. Their empirical pretensions placed them amid the major forces of change in the nineteenth century[24][emphasis added]

My own discussion of the re-shaping of the 1855 Preface into "Poem of Many In One" and of the dramatic structure of "Poem of the Road" has sought to demonstrate Whitman constructing a discourse where he is able to discuss and also exemplify the healing power of the mind as a key innate faculty. I suggest that examples of "[engineered] unlimited personal improvement" and genuine offerings of "corroborative inductive support" are to be found in both poems. The first is instanced in the following key moments:

> Now it (happiness) flows into us – we are rightly charged[25]... I swear I begin to see the meaning of these things[26]... If you would be better than all that has ever been before,/ come listen to me, and I will to you.[27]

The second is exemplified by the following:

> I will toss the new gladness and roughness among them:
> Whoever denies me, it shall not trouble me.
> Whoever accepts me, he or she shall be blessed,
> and shall bless me[28]

and

> Allons! The road is before us!
> It is safe – I have tried it – my own feet have
> tried it well.[29]

Together these moments are contributing to Whitman's version of the key healthy-mindedness ideal of a 'felt-connection' a health-giving connection between individual and his or her sense of well-being.

I now wish to return to an investigation of "Poem of the Road" in the light of Davies' identification of *The American Phrenological Journal* as an important cultural vehicle inspiring hope in those conscious of their own deficiencies, and also, in the context of Wrobel's claims concerning the alluring nature of co-operation between healer and "patient" in mental succour, a pattern he sees as typified within the pseudo-sciences of Whitman's times.

It is necessary to extend the previous discussion of the locus of "here" in the poem and its identification of a range of referents – a place of mental nourishment, one of love, one where there is an 'efflux of the soul' one holding forth the prospect of happiness. An examination of the intimate links between the discourse patterns of *The American Phrenological Journal* and the Whitman poems in question will be beneficial in this regard.

The theme of a road to be travelled and which will be of benefit to the reader is one that is common through many editions of the journal, providing one of the main themes in the self-promotional message that is so important to the Editor. In the "New Year Salutation" for 1853 we find the following:

> This work aims to show man how to be happy, by developing the laws of health and making the path so plain that the common, the uneducated mind, may find and follow it.[30]

In an editorial retrospect from 1851 the path and its functions is again present:

> (Our) Purpose has been in awakening a spirit of self-culture, the "goals" of human existence "wisdom, VIRTUE, HAPPINESS" can be considered as "bright lights gleaming on our pathway".[3132] [original fonts]

Finally, in the Editor's New Year message in January 1856 the light provided by phrenology shines on a path of duty carefully linked to the recurrent theme of self-improvement through self-knowledge; firstly an epigraph from Hon. T J Rush sets the scene:

> When a man properly understands himself, mentally and physically, his road to happiness is smooth, and society has a strong guarantee for his good conduct and usefulness.[33]

This is reinforced by the editor's comment in his New Year Message:

> Phrenology had one great advantage. It so flooded the minds of those who embraced it with light, it made the path of duty[34] so clear...[35]

The presence of such a trope in prominent, keynote, annual self-reviews, linked as it is to "Poem of the Road" is of interest in suggesting Whitman's common purpose with Fowler and Wells in relation to their audience, the pursuit of self-fulfilment through self-improvement via their mental faculties. The precise position Whitman adopts, in his therapeutic offerings to his readers, in relation to the various radical

and conformist strands of the trope of the road as a path to fulfilment by an individual demands further investigation.[36]

Whitman, as we have seen in "Poem of the Road", sees his purpose as getting to the "kernel" of truths and adopts a militant pose in announcing his intent. In 1849 the editor of *The American Phrenological Journal* strikes a very similar note in the lead article of the first edition of the year. In championing the success of the first ten years he characterises the approach as one of "great plainness of speech", and defiantly announces that "still greater will characterise it hereafter". In order to pursue the end of the journal, "to promulgate soul-purifying and expanding truths, which shall make all its readers better and happier,"[37] he militantly announces this promulgation "will be the one object of every number – every page" and announces an approach that sounds very similar to Whitman's drive to get at the "kernels":

> If, possibly, it may have been policy to modify, soften down, and perhaps suppress, because the world was not prepared to receive the whole truth. That necessity exists no longer. It does not mean to be unkind or censorious, but, depends upon it, *it shall mince nothing*. [added emphasis][38]

Earlier in the Prospectus for Volume VII a similar approach is spelt out. In order to more fully include "the exposition and enforcing of the laws of animal life, including the value of health and the means of regaining and preserving it", more time will now be devoted to proclaiming how "our talents, our virtues, our vices, our mental and moral progression depend more upon what, how, and when, we eat, drink, sleep, labor bathe etc – than most people realise".

He then launches a salvo which in terms of Whitman's discussion in "Poem of the Road" "tears off husks", "undoes stratagems" and "undoes envelopes" for the potential reader:

> The plain fact is, few people know how to eat! Or sleep!
> Or breathe! Or live![39]

By the climax of his address Fowler is fully exploiting some significant agricultural tropes, as always with an un-Whitmanlike moralistic tone:

> Our field is indeed the world. Not only is it ripe for harvest, but it is becoming corrupted and all overgrown with the tares of uncleanness and thistle of sin. To receive the good into vessels, but to cast the bad away, will be the object of every successive number of this work. Those, therefore who drop tears of sorrow over fallen humanity, or who would lend a helping hand to it's restoration, may perhaps do good as effectually by circulating this work as in any other way; for its pages will embody both the seeds and the core of all reform[40]

Whitman announces most carefully in "Poem of the Road" that the efflux of the soul is "here" and then delineates that locus as one where a man or woman can "expand his blood" where he/she has "melodious thoughts", where interchanges with strangers consist of freely-given good-will and that all takes place in the open air and the contact invigorates or "charges" us: [41]

> The efflux of the soul is happiness – here is happiness
> I think it pervades the air, waiting at all times,
> Now it flows into us – we are rightly charged. [42]

The phrase "rightly charged" is another of Whitman's playful but very earnest puns which acts as a climax to the lengthy section which commenced with "here is the efflux of the soul". As he strives to link the efflux to "happiness" achieved in the

mental arena, Whitman builds on at least one of the conventional pseudo-scientific concepts[43] – the air as naturally electric and therapeutic – but the trope is a complex one, including as it does the poem, (now flowing into "us," reader and poet) as performatively offering succour through itself being a source of happiness. This performative intent can be glimpsed in Aspiz's precise observation on "Poem of the Road":

> Invigorated and energised by the electrical and spiritual qualities of the open air, he...interchanges his own magnetism with that of others. On this public and cosmic road, he acknowledges the divine electricity operating within himself and becomes wonder-struck – a self-ordained seer.[44]

Astute as this is, it has failed to grasp what Whitman seeks to borrow from Fowler, the insistence on the 'interchange' being an instructional one, relating to the electric power of the mind, realised through the poem, or text, itself.

The full range of meaning of "charged" can be shown to contribute to Whitman's delineation of a particular form of mental happiness, one which bears some resemblance to the treatment of this state of mind in *The American Phrenological Journal*, but a delineation which is, in its complexity, both derivative and adaptive.

The pun carries a critique of convention when consideration is given to the subtle use of "I think" in the preceding line. Here, "I think" implies rejection of the credos of conventional thinking and their replacement with certain knowledge, based on the individual just "thinking", i.e. having the courage to think positively. In addition the teasing implication of "I think (and) it pervades the air" lingers in the speaker's declaration, where 'think' almost becomes a performative verb.[45] Viewed this way "charged" then operates on two levels: firstly, as referring to the exhilarating,

electric, interpersonal happiness that has been outlined (here it is, Whitman says); then, in addition, it also begins to teasingly suggest that poet and reader have a duty to achieve this happiness – it is our "charge".

The readers of *the American Phrenological Journal* are consistently 'charged' by the editors and contributors with the duty of being happy. Early in the history of *The American Phrenological Journal,* in an aggressively self-defiant article entitled "Questions Which Are Considered as Settled by Phrenology", the final item reads thus:

> That every organ has received a fixed definite constitution with corresponding relations to external objects. Hence in proportion as man understands and obeys these relations, in the same proportion he secures his own happiness, and approximates to the great end of his being."[46]

The reader is duty bound to read and learn and be happy; that is the most settled question of all. The Editor, in 1844, chooses to reprint the Introduction to a text which was rapidly becoming a key phrenology text and whose opening lines might well be paraphrased as the Journal's equivalent to Whitman's "the efflux of the soul is happiness":

> That HAPPINESS is the sole object of Man's creation, is rendered evident by its being the only legitimate product of every organ of his body, every faculty of his mind, every element of his nature.[47] [48]

Elsewhere the phrenological "road" to happiness is spelt out for the reader, as phrenology will:

> Teach everyone how to exercise his faculties in accordance with their primitive condition.... and thereby how to become the recipient of *uninterrupted mental enjoyment*. [added emphasis][49]

Indeed the strained tones of the promise, with its austere "uninterrupted mental enjoyment", echo the most extreme Fowler motif above – "happiness as sole object" – which now comes to dominate the final paragraph:

> I repeat. The legitimate function of every physical organ, of every mental faculty of every element of man is HAPPINESS, ALL happiness, *pure, unalloyed, unmitigated* happiness, *and nothing else.* Man was made *solely to be happy*, to be *perfectly* happy, and for *that alone*. [original typography]

Here both syntax and typography are at full stretch as Fowler preaches his message. There are also scattered throughout the Journal references to happiness as a social condition:

> That society is all wrong and that much of the vice and misery of mankind, grow out of our institutions, so many of which clash with the nature of man, admits of no cavil or doubt: and yet their fearful extent no human mind can fathom.[50]

The concern, however, is to drum home, consistently, and admittedly, repetitiously, the message that happiness is a possibility for the individual reader. The most lucid and accessible expositions of that message are perhaps to be found in the Editorial self-promotions which are an annual feature of *The American Phrenological Journal* – opening each volume, welcoming the New Year, and finishing each volume.

I wish to focus now on a number of such entries around 1846 to suggest that some of the aspects of the locus, "here" in "Poem of the Road" are also present in these entries. I also suggest their presence made available to Whitman an authoritative editorial voice, one dramatically demonstrating the promise of self- improvement to the reader, one which, with significant refinement, would furnish a model for his own stance to his readers, even as he maintained a critical stance to its ethos.

Often the editorial stance consists of emphatically guiding the reader toward an edifying exposure to happiness, a kind of tutelage in being happy. The following treatment by Fowler of a Nelson Sizer article is typical. The theory of how any organ can be enlarged and increased by exercise is spelled out in the article by Sizer, a contributor to *The American Phrenological Journal* and close colleague of the Fowlers. However the article reader's reception of Sizer's statements is carefully mediated by a Fowler introduction. In this Fowler implores the reader to treat the lesson entitled "Excitement of the Mental organs" as "a *practical* illustration of how to effect the improvement of our several mental powers, and, as such is recommended to our readers as worthy of particular attention. *Read. Re-read. Practice.*" [added emphasis][51]

The last three commands do not convey the same colloquial encouragement they would normally suggest, if found in casual conversation. They are, in the context of phrenological belief in the practical efficacy of instruction, what Wrobel called phrenology's 'empirical pretensions', an instruction to read and re-read Sizer's description of his own exercising of his positive faculties, and to do so in the certain belief that this reading *alone* will enlarge the readers' faculties.

It is worth looking at Sizer's claims in some detail. He describes a physical sensation:

> Almost always I feel a sense of fulness, of pressure and pain, in the precise location of the organ of which I have been speaking ... when Benevolence is the subject I see the lame, the halt, the blind, and the disconsolate, and hear the mangled wail of suffering sons and daughters of affliction, and sigh for the means to relief their wants and exterminate their sorrow ... when I speak of adhesiveness all my former friends stand before me, or my warm affections expand to every section of the world which contains a friend.[52]

This can be viewed as a self-regarding dramatisation of being an estimable individual with fully activated phrenological organs of the mind. However there is a more interesting way to view Sizer's article: to study it in the light of the manner in which Fowler frames its reception for the avid reader of the Journal. Fowler is instructing his readership to practice the energising of benevolence by reading an account of how the mere mention of the organ responsible, or a description of its use, energises the reporting user and the reader and brings happiness. Might not this provide a model for Whitman: by talking in your poetry about the power of the thought, and dramatising the path that takes you on and the efflux of happiness that ensues, might not the poet be able to gently instruct and assist his readers?

I am not suggesting that Whitman was directly influenced to imitate this or any other article in *The American Phrenological Journal.* I do however suggest that within the discourse patterns of the journal Whitman was exposed to a range of devices which he could mould to his own, more complex, purposes. If a template for dramatising

the power of thought was one such device capable of being glimpsed in the Fowler and Sizer example, so was the particular editorial voice of the magazine.

The journal was indeed able to provide him with a series of examples of dramatic claims made by an apparently concerned and empathic editor to his ever-growing readership.[53] At the end of Volume Eight in "Editor's Farewell" Fowler claims:

> Reader, we have penned every page for your good not for our own advancement – to render you the HAPPIER and BETTER, not for our gain. We have endeavoured to "become one with you" that we might carry you onward and upward in that progressive road of SELF-IMPROVEMENT on which we have so copiously expiated.[54][emphasis in original]

There is a model here for Whitman to consider and much further food for thought when "becoming one," so emphatically trumpeted above, is immediately defined thus:

> I should like to see every reader face to face. The deep personal interest I have taken in you has made me LOVE and desire to see you all, but if this privilege is denied me in this state of being, may we in the higher and holier sphere … renew that intercommunion of soul to soul thus begun.[55]

Despite the sickly sentimental hint of meeting in heaven the key is that the communion between editor and reader is assumed to already exist – 'thus begun'- and can thus be renewed. The Adhesiveness of which Whitman spoke in "Poem of the Road" is celebrated here, affirmed as having already happened in the pages of the journal. Fowler the showman and self-publicist is yearning for a relationship that Whitman craved. Fowler launches his own, self-flattering, editorial persona. It is possible that Whitman's sensitive and caring, healing, persona was born in rejection of just such an editorial model.

That Adhesiveness is central to the purpose and activities of *The Phrenological Journal* is proven by this comment at the opening of the year 1847:

> And the one leading object of this Journal will be to expound these laws – physical, mental and moral, and also awake in its readers a LOVE for them – a love surpassing all other loves, the tender yearnings of connubial and parental love not excepted.[56]

There are, however, present in this comment by Fowler certain notes – the sentimentalised version of love's 'tender yearnings'; the prominence given to moral laws – which jar severely with Whitman's poem-songs with their celebrations of love for all and love as the kelson, the law of the cosmos. Indeed Fowler seems to be saying that to love the laws of phrenology (and of course love or adhesiveness is a key law) is more important than to love people.

I wish to explore that difference, that deficiency in Fowler, as it is revealed in an editorial nearer to the 1856 poems. I wish to do so to pinpoint, again, where Whitman borrows from the model I have been suggesting only to depart from Fowler in pursuing his own humanitarian therapeutic. Fowler implores the reader to change, as is appropriate for a new year:

> We would fain persuade you to turn over a new leaf – to open a new life account. We shall endeavour to induce you to begin today – now- to fulfil fully this one great end as well as privilege of your existence. And those who have already rendered themselves more or less unhappy for life, should render themselves as comfortable as they can.[57]

A tone of cheap and easy sarcasm at the expense of those who must stay "unhappy" is present here, presumably used by Fowler to flatter those under his instruction. This is a tone diametrically opposite to Whitman's inclusive offer to all to join him "on the road":

> Still here I carry my old delicious burdens,
> I carry them, men and women- I carry them
> With me wherever I go, ...
> I think whatever I meet on the road I shall like,
> And whatever beholds me shall like me,
> I think whoever I see must be happy.[58]

The nature of the love being discussed by Fowler is also of concern at other points in his editorial pronouncements when he talks of interpersonal love. Is not Whitman in his example of Adhesiveness in "Poem of the Road", and consistently in all his poetry, as in,

> Do you know what it is as you pass to be loved
> by strangers
> Do you know the talk of those turning eye-balls,?[59]

referring to electrical interpersonal contact? Fowler, on the other hand, talks of his love, and wishes to command his readers' channelling of love (in accordance with the laws of phrenology) in a manner that is self-seeking and self-directed rather than involving the interpersonal.

If we examine the key opening of "Poem of Many In One" we see a generous all-embracing empathy for all in the following:

> Have you thought there could be but a single

> Supreme?
> There can be any number of Supremes –one
> does not countervail another any more than
> One eye-sight countervails another, or one life
> countervails another
> All is eligible to all
> All is for individuals – all is for you,
> No condition is prohibited, not God's or any,
> If one is lost, you are inevitably lost.[60]

Fowler strikes up a very different note in a typical "Editorial Remark" made while addressing an important issue for his readership, namely the origin of and relief from social and mental anxieties. His comments come in an article entitled "Editorial Remarks"[61] placed immediately after an article discussing hope as a faculty of the mind. Each faculty of mind that formed a part of the phrenologist's mapping of the skull is treated in turn by an article similar to this one on hope. Only in the case of hope, however, does Fowler feel drawn to offer this cautionary editorial mediation:

> Our correspondent has almost poetically described the inspiring influences of Hope, and this is the only manner in which the faculty should ever be exercised. For many years we have studied this question – can Hope take on a discouraged or reversed action? All the faculties are capable of this perverted action. Hope of course included. [He then explains Amatitiveness can be reversed to become vicious sensual action, Combativeness becomes anger, Approbativeness becomes shame. Benevolence reversed becomes inability to help others.] So Hope is capable of becoming reversed – of taking on a painful, perverted, abnormal action and that action disheartens, palsies, crushes, and generates that despair so fatal to effort and so extremely painful. And we write this appendix simply to warn and guard readers against this withering exercise of Hope.

Fowler reveals in his comments that follow that he is aware that many of his contemporaries harboured self-doubts – he talks of them having an attitude of "I can't and it's no use to try" and as he sees it this produces "despair (which) completely unmans its victim", which he believes often leads to suicide.

How different is the stance Whitman takes in passages which sit within his therapeutic masterclasses and seek to address and embrace those burdened with self doubt, those with whom he empathises; first in "Song of Myself":

> Oh despairer, here is my neck,
> By God! you shall not go down
> I dilate you with tremendous breath ....I buoy you up....
>
> The weakest and the shallowest is deathless with me
> What I do and say the same waits for me
> Every thought that flounders in me the same flounders in them[62]

Then in "Poem of the Road":

> These yearnings, why are they? These thoughts
> In the darkness, why are they?.....
> Allons! out of the dark confinement!
> It is useless to protest – I know it all, and expose it,

When we reach the climax of the shared journey on the road as Whitman's companion, we are mentally "well armed"[63] through his giving of himself – "I give you my love"- lifted in self esteem by one who understands self-doubt.

An even more marked example is revealed in the manner of Fowler's blustering advice in the following, which again stands in juxtaposition to the all-embracing sympathy offered by Whitman. He advises, "whoever experiences this feeling [of a diseased nervous system] sometimes called 'the blues', hypochondria etc.," thus:

> Let such remember that these fearful forebodings have an INTERNAL not an external cause – are occasioned not by any REAL trouble, but are purely imaginative – are consequent on the sickly action of Hope, Cautiousness, and other faculties; and should therefore be unceremoniously turned out of doors,

> first by a mental determination not to indulge them, and next, by right remedial agents, especially bathing.[64] [emphasis in original]

This rather dictatorial enjoinder – "let such remember" – places the reader in the same position as that of Americans later in the century who were advocates of New Thought and Mind Cure Therapeutics. External causes of pain are reduced to "imaginary" mental miss-thoughts; faculties are themselves "sick"; the action to be taken as remedy is purely mental and self-directed and described as equivalent to giving yourself a good talking to. Interestingly, bathing – often linked to contemporary Water Cure "fads" – is seen as beneficial. There is, however, no evading the call for repressive self militancy – the phrase "unceremoniously turned out of doors" is a particularly unattractive picture of militant self adjustment.

This is a long way from the Whitman persona who vows with the reader to face up to those external agents, social roles, conventions etc which contribute to unhappiness,

> I swear I will not be outfaced by irrational things
> I will penetrate what it is in them that is *sarcastic upon me*, [emphasis added][65]

and offers himself to the reader by the sharing of fears and concerns and aspirations – "I give you myself before preaching or law."[66]

The last paragraphs of Fowler's "Remarks" offer a place where the reader can, apparently, engage with any problems of self doubt, can re-connect with beguiling

hope. This is a place of contrast, offering "a place itself the garden of Eden" in opposition to "a place of entire darkness and torment":

> If your wife is indulging this life-wasting feeling, be its cause what it may, do all you know to divert her mind, and resuscitate her nervous energies. To allow her to continue long in this state is completely to spoil her... Hope on, hope ever and never for a moment harbour one gloomy feeling.[67]

Rather than focusing on the defiant but hollow platitiude of the final line it is more helpful to acknowledge that the concern Fowler addresses – the lack of hope in many - and the direct mode of address, must have struck a cord with Whitman. It would not have escaped Whitman's attention, however, that the direct injunction is to act on behalf of another, your spouse, your female companion.

If Whitman was attracted by the direct stance taken by Fowler early in *The American Phrenological Jounral*, yet concerned about the displacement seen above, he would have witnessed, by July 1856, a further example of Fowler safely projecting onto others the very plight he sought to heal but could not own in himself or his reader. This ability on Fowler's part to effectively enter into a collusive relation with his reader stands opposed to everything Whitman strove for, preventing as it does any honest, direct and open, albeit painful, discourse between poet and anxious reader:

> Reader, *have you a friend grasping in mental darkness*? Is *his* mind warped or burdened with anxiety? Bring *him* to the fountain of light for consolation. Show *him* the cause of his troubles and point *him* to the remedy .... is *he* desponding? Show *him* how to cultivate deficient hope. In short whatever may need encouragement or restraint, whatever deficiency or excess, may be learned in no other way as by the aid of Phrenology.....
> We solicit the services of all men and of all women to aid us in disseminating everywhere a knowledge of the glorious science through *The American Phrenological Journal.*[68] [emphasis added]

The masthead of the journal never lacked dramatic announcements trumpeting the power of phrenology and studiously listing the categories of beneficiaries. By 1854 however an additional boast appears close-by under 'Education;' the editorial stance and its triumphant reach are loudly vaunted through the adoption of a familial trope:

> The young also, will find the JOURNAL, a friend and foster-father, to encourage them in virtue, shield them from vice and prepare them for usefulness and success in life.[69]

What is being foregrounded in this proud boast is a relationship between journal and young reader akin to that of a foster-father/friend. This role will be used to ensure that phrenological instruction promotes moral behaviour and protection from bad habits –the young will be "shielded." In addition, however, the phrase 'usefulness and success in life' hints at material success and is in tune with the journal's concern to address its readers, throughout 1854, in a manner which singularly foregrounds economic man.

This is shown clearly in the Journal New Year message of 1854, entitled 'Salutatory: Our New Year.' This a lengthy, breathless, self-dramatising outpouring of all the benefits of phrenology, for the individual and the nation. Fowler continues to emphasise feeding the reader's mind but plays down the dis-ease of mind that requires to be assuaged. There is instead a persistent emphasis, not on the intellectual benefits of self-knowledge concerning the mind, but on economic benefits. Fowler, as editor, continues to insist the reader has a "duty" to partake of pleasure and happiness through the instruction provided by phrenology. However, the economic motive for action is present in the opening paragraphs:

> Then the more pleasure you can make 1854 yield you, the more it will be worth to you; and hence if *The American Phrenological Journal* can be instrumental in rendering you the more happy than you would be without it, of course it will be valuable as it promotes this end. It costs only a dollar, even less to clubs.... Only one penny per week on your board bill , to purchase FOOD FOR MIND.

Knowledge is presented in the body of the "Salutation" as a commodity, a worthwhile investment and the Journal offers itself as the keenest investment around:

> Take this very article as a sample. Incorporating its leading idea- making yourself the happiest possible in 1854 – into your life-purpose , it will increase the ratio of your enjoyment more, by many percent, than without it. Of course, not practiced it will do little good; but the more good, the more it is LIVED OUT.

Fowler's use of one trope is extremely revealing of a discourse which has a financial basis. He wishes to alert the reader to the untapped potential that lies within each individual and does so by presenting these mental laws and organs which form the phrenological system as, "Our mines of happiness lie where Californian gold lay twenty years ago-unknown, while Phrenology is to our mental treasures what its discoverer and miners are to it."[70]

Fowler has reduced phrenological knowledge to a commodity to be sold on the basis of its ability to provide a happiness which is measured by financial return and the trope of the Californian gold rush provides an ironic indication of the risk involved. This "Salutation" is his equivalent of Whitman's invitation to join him on the road to self-discovery and increase of self-esteem. Looking at the manner in which Whitman deals with financial aspects of the journey ahead again reveals the poet setting his stall against Fowler's discourse. When Whitman has reached the point in "Poem of the Road" where he throws out his series of "Allons!" to his companions,

two adjacent cries are of particular interest in relation the world of finance and investment:

> Allons! With power, liberty, the earth, the
> Elements!
> Health, defiance, gaiety, self-esteem, curiosity!
> Allons from all formulas!
> From your formulas, O bat-eyed and materialistic
> Priests![71]

The first rallying call implies that self-esteem comes through 'defiance' and the second sets out the target of the defiant stance to be adopted, those who provide rigid "formulas." It will be the purpose of this study to fully document how Whitman came to see phrenology and other mind-cure discourses as formulae restricting those they purported to help. In this instance Fowler's performance in his 1854 "Salutation" suggests he would make a worthy target for Whitman's companions: his recipe for investing in your own mental happiness by investing in his Journal's laws and "mental truths" making him look suspiciously like ' a bat-eyed and materialistic priest.'

Whitman reveals in the remainder of "Poem of the Road" an attitude to his companions that is in marked contrast to Fowler's insistence on a commercial nexus. Early on there is a dramatic declaration, "Here is the profound lesson of reception, neither/ preference or denial," and the verse paragraph moves through the acceptance of a whole range of society's outcasts – beggars, drunkards, felons – to end with the emphatic, "None but are accepted, none but are *dear* to me."[72] [Emphasis added] The pun in 'dear' defines Whitman's stance. Those on the road, those to be helped to fulfilment by raising their self-esteem, will not be valued in any commercial

sense, but will be of value to him because he cares for and loves them. The very end of the poem, where Whitman makes a plea and an offer simultaneously,

> Mon enfant! I give you my hand!
> I give you my love, more precious than money,
> I give you myself, before preaching or law; ,[73]

marks the determination on Whitman's part to foreground love before money and to promise that his discourse, his instruction, will neither "preach" nor be codified in restrictive laws.

It has been important to consider *The American Phrenological Journal* as a significant element of the cultural context within which Whitman was operating. By looking in the main at the editor-reader interfaces it has been possible to show the purposes Whitman shared with Fowler.[74] It has also been important to demonstrate that in laying out schematically and dramatically his view of the therapeutic power of the mind in the "Preface" of 1855 and poems from the 1856 *Leaves of Grass* Whitman had begun to seek a path which involved challenge, based as it was on trust in and openness to his reader – a relation that was dynamic and would grow organically, as Whitman believed. It is also important that Whitman denied and rejected what I have identified as a spurious, commercially driven and mechanistic stance of "helper" which had become the role Fowler was adopting by 1854.[75]

There are very few direct comments known to be made by Whitman concerning Fowler and practicing phrenologists. Perhaps the most significant in terms of its common currency[76] in appraising Whitman's relation to phrenology is an early journalistic comment from his time on *The Brooklyn Eagle:*

> I applaud the fair prospect of the people at last waking up to a proper degree of interest in the great subject at hand. If the professor can, as he professes, teach man to know their intellectual and moral deficiencies, and remedy them, we do not see that our people may long remain imperfect. He says that any particular bump, like a blacksmith's arm, may be enlarged by exercise, to almost any desirable extent. If this is the case, we have truly attained the only thing needful in this life, and had better stop at this point. Human knowledge need go no further than the *manufacture* of *mind* and *morals*. [emphasis added][77]

Whitman's teasing yet sardonic rejoicing at the imagined achievement of Fowler's plan to improve all by manufacture and mechanistic application of mental aspects is suggestive. It demonstrates that even in 1846 he was ready to make a guarded and cautionary use of the mental therapy model Fowler offered, anticipating what is revealed by examination of the complex relationship between *The American Phrenological Journal's* discourse and that of Whitman's "Poem of the Road", one of common purpose, as well as a defiant repudiation of the Journal's 'formulae.'

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[1] Leaves of Grass 1856, p. 238.
[2] Ibid., p. 237.
[3] Ibid., p.237.
[4] This complexity is discussed in H. Aspiz, "Whitman's Poem of the Road," *Walt Whitman Quarterly Review,* 12:3. p. 172-3. Here Aspiz identifies the locus of the poem as ' the poet-person's expanding consciousness.' He also offers the view that the poem is a clear example of Whitman's 'poetic journeys being mental (emphasis in original) journeys.' He views the poem as 'a voyage into the interior of the poet's liberated self.'
[5] Leaves of Grass 1856, p.223.
[6] Ibid., p.224.
[7] Ibid., p 226.
[8] Both Ibid., p 228.
[9] All Ibid., p.229.
[10] Ibid., p.229.
[11] There are some clever wordplays operating here. Essentially in championing a combative mental stance to be taken in opposition to others' stratagems Whitman manages to suggest that this attacking mode is both natural and healthy. The use of 'husks' as in harvesting and of 'kernel' assists with this representation. He is insisting, also, that the combative frame of mind necessarily probes to the very essence of poetry, thought, and indeed of all objects of study. This suggestion effectively naturalises and legitimises combative thought. It links the mental stance being championed to that adopted by the transcendentalists in their desire to find a mode capable of going directly to objects, to intellectual concepts and to religious truths.

[12] Leaves of Grass 1856, p. 229-231.

[13] J.R. LeMaster and Donald D. Kummings, eds., *Walt Whitman An Encyclopedia* (London and New York, Garland Publishing, 1998) respectively, Fowler and Wells (230), Phrenology (520-23), Popular Culture (534-6) and Pseudosciences (557-60).

Madeleine Sterne discussing Fowler and Wells states, "they continued to popularise the belief that self-knowledge through phrenological analysis could lead to self-improvement."(230). Arthur Wrobel, discussing phrenology, acknowledges "Whitman's growing interest, from the late 1840s to the mid 50s, in the newly emerging science of phrenology," also identifies Whitman the journalist undertaking reviews of phrenological texts, and identifies evidence from the notebooks of Whitman familiarising himself with the technical jargon of phrenology. He claims that "even when the physical ties with the phrenologists were severed, Whitman's intellectual and spiritual debts to them were to remain intact throughout his lifetime."(520-1). Wrobel also notes the 'allure' of phrenology to 'a host of prominent and respectable nineteenth century figures, including Whitman .... It figured prominently in the major social issues of the period; education, health reform, human sexuality, eugenics, religion, political speculation and philosophy."(522). The strongest claim Wrobel makes is " the presence of phrenology content goes far in accounting for Whitman's poetic origins and may well have been at least as important in bringing him to a 'boil' as Emerson (522).

David Reynolds surveying the popular culture of Whitman's time states that "his poetry made affirmative statements that reveal the influence of positive health reforms of the day, particularly those popularised by the publishing firm of Fowler and Wells. In particular the Fowlers' popular versions of phrenology and physiology contributed to his outlook. ..... The healer persona of Whitman's poetry was directly linked to the Fowlers' notion of health .....the poet was the one in perfect equilibrium"(535.)

Scanning the wider arena of pseudosciences, Wrobel comments further on the possible links between Whitman, the Fowlers and phrenology, claiming that the explanation for Fowler and Wells daring to risk publishing and distributing the 1856 edition of *Leaves of Grass* is that "they would have recognised themselves now transformed into poetry." (557). Whitman, he also claims, " adopted the lore of pseudomedical practices and various health therapies .... to a frankly prescriptive end....(fashioning) both a persona and images of men and women who as models of superior physical and moral training were intended to counteract contemporary fears about the deteriorisation of America's citizenry.(560).

In *Heads and Headliners*: *The Phrenological Fowler(*Norman ,University of Oklahoma Press,1971), Madeleine Stern documents the close links Whitman had in his early role as bookseller with the Fowlers, claiming "the bills received by Whitman from the firm reflect Whitman's bookselling activities and these include 'Combe's Physiology' and five 'Phrenological Journal bound'" (107).

In his "Walt Whitman and his Chart of Bumps" *American Literature* 2 (1931): p. 350-384, Edward Hungerford uses articles from *The American Phrenological Journal*, found after Whitman's death, to claim that " it seems likely that he himself was a subscriber to the journal."(p.360).

[14] Gay Wilson Allen, *The New Whitman Handbook* (New York, New York University Press, 1975) p.47.

[15] John D. Davies, *Phrenology: Fad and Science: A 19th Century Crusade* (New Haven, Yale University Press,1955).n. p. 183. Davies identifies a significant gap in the study of the cultural milieu in which phrenology should be located which he seeks to rectify when he states, "The foundation of this study has been the files of the *American Phrenological Journal and Magazine of Science* and *The American Phrenological Journal* which have not been used by scholars in spite of the fact that their columns provide an epitome of phrenological concepts and a running history of the movement."

[16] Ibid., p.108.

[17] Ibid., p.109.

[18] Ibid., p.165.

[19] Ibid., p.169 whilst quoting James Freeman Clarke.

[20] Ibid.

[21] In Arthur Wrobel, ed., *Pseudo-Science and Society in 19th Century America* (Lexington, University of Kentucky Press, 1987) and in "Whitman and the Phrenologists; The Divine Body and the Sensuous Soul" in *PMLA* 89 (1974): 17-23.

[22] "Engineered" is a key term. It strongly suggests mechanistic fashioning, a form of creation or production which was anathema to Whitman. His critique of this aspect of phrenology will be dealt with subsequently.

[23] *Pseudo-Science*, pp. 7-8.
[24] Ibid ., p.8.
[25] Leaves of Grass 1856, p.230.
[26] Ibid., p. 197.
[27] Ibid., p. 182.
[28] Ibid., p. 227.
[29] Ibid., p.239.
[30] APJ. XVII: 1(1853) p. 1
[31] Ibid., XIV: 4 (1851) p. 187.
[32] The particular form of road chosen by Fowler does tend to be a "pathway." This stands in contrast to Whitman's love of an 'open road.' The former suggests a path already laid down, travelled previously by others and offering guidance and assistance. The trope was an important one for Fowler and the exponents of phrenological advice and often featured in the titles of their books as The Path to follow, the path to avoid etc. The tension within phrenology, between the liberation of potential in the self, and insistence on repression and control and duty surfaces at the level trope, seen here in Whitman's careful choice.
[33] APJ, XXIII: 1 (1856) p. 1.
[34] This atypical clarion call reinforces the point made in note 14.
[35] APJ, XXII: I (1856) p. 1.
[36] The range of road references linked to self-improvement through the application of phrenological principles is considerable: materialistic improvement, spiritual improvement, fulfilment and improvement through conforming to society's call to duty. The way Whitman positions himself in relation to these is an aspect of this study.
[37] Promulge' and 'promulgate' neatly encapsulate Wrobel's observations concerning 'corroborative inductive support.' The journal is announcing it will lay down laws of mental health and that the reader will feel these spread within him or her. This recurrent manifesto sentence is very close to Whitman's concerns and 'promulge' will feature strongly in Whitman's own 'manifesto' poems, discussed in the later chapters of this study.
[38] APJ, XI: 1(1849) p. 13.
[39] Ibid.,VII: 1(1845) p. 1.
[40] Ibid., p. 2.
[41] Harold Aspiz in *Walt Whitman and the Body Beautiful* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1980) has examined Whitman's interest in an energising electrical force in the air.
[42] Leaves of Grass 1856, p.229-30.
[43]Aspiz, *Body Beautiful*, Ch.5, "The Body Electric" brilliantly summarises ideas concerning electricity in the pseudo-science of the time which influenced Whitman: the sexual charge in the male body, in sperm, in the physical cosmos up to and including planetary systems, in the mesmeric force which could be used to heal. .Aspiz comments that Whitman's adaptation of these ideas is similar to his "debt" to phrenology:

> ...neither his theories of male and female sexuality nor his many other adaptations of electrical lore display much regard for consistency or scientific accuracy. As with phrenology, Whitman seemed to value electricity chiefly for its metaphoric possibilities and its power to symbolize human and poetic transcendence. As electricity was a mysterious power grounded in the earthly, material world and yet a part of the celestial ambience; as it seemed to be the link between the physical, mental, and spiritual worlds; and as it seemed to constitute the very psychic essence, Whitman incorporated it into his poetic imagery and language(p.150).

I concur but wish to add the usefulness to Whitman of electricity as an image of the link between that part of an individual's mental self image and happiness.
[44] Aspiz, p.173.
[45] C. Carroll Hollis, *Language and Style in" Leaves of Grass"* (Baton Rouge, Louisiana State UP,1983) and James Perrin Warren, *Walt Whitman's Language Experiment* (University Park, Pennsylvania UP, 1990) have both contributed to discussion of the linguistic complexity of Whitman's poetic.
[46] APJ, 1:3 p.72.
[47] Ibid., V: 3 p.1.
[48] Elsewhere in the Preface Fowler bewails the current state of unhappiness and claims his contemporaries can be ten times happier.
[49] APJ, III: 2 p. 75
[50] Ibid., VI; 2 p. 39.

[51] Ibid., VIII: 2 p. 48.
[52] Ibid., VIII: 2 p.59.
[53] Fowler was prone to calculate via his own very generous mathematics a very high readership and broadcast it annually at the turn of the year and when a new subscription commenced.
[54] APJ, 8:4 p.388-9.
[55] Ibid., p. 389.
[56] Ibid., 9: 1 p. 10.
[57] Ibid., XIX: 5 p 14.
[58] Leaves of Grass 1856, pp. 223, 226.
[59] Ibid., p. 229.
[60] Ibid., p. 180-1
[61] APJ, 12 p.208-10.
[62] Variorum, I p. 63, ll. 1012-1014; p.67, ll. 1080-1082.
[63] Leaves of Grass 1856, 229, 237, 239.
[64] APJ, Vol. 12: 1, p.208-10.
[65] Leaves of Grass 1856, p.200.
[66] Ibid., p. 239.
[67] APJ, 12 p. 208-10.
[68] APJ, Jan 56
[69] Ibid., XVIII : 6 p. 1.
[70] All APJ, XIX: 1. Jan., 54. pp. 13-15.
[71] Leaves of Grass 1856, p. 232.
[72] Ibid., p.224.
[73] Ibid., p. 239.
[74] In "Whitman and the Phrenologists" Wrobel stresses the importance to Whitman of Fowler's manner of talking, "the very subjective and emotional tone in Whitman's writings, the sense of a person joyously receiving his identity..... echoes a similar exuberant and evangelical tone found in the personal and social reform tracts of the many nineteenth century fads dedicated to various methods of self-improvement."(p.21.) I would concur with this view.
[75] This stance of assisting the reader to material prosperity within a conventional social role will lead in turn to the utilitarian and formulaic self-help mind cure books later in the century.
[76] This passage is used by, amongst others, David Reynolds, in *Walt Whitman's America* (New York: Vintage, 1996), p.247. Reynolds reads the comment as unmediated praise for Fowler. Reynolds makes great claims for Fowler's direct influence on Whitman, tracing Whitman's typographical style as an aid to him in self-regulation, particularly in the notebooks, in passages relating to his yearnings for Peter Doyle. In contrast, he does not elucidate where Fowler's influence on what he terms 'social disturbance' can be found in Whitman's work.
[77] Herbert Bergman, ed., *Walt Whitman, Journalism* (New York, Peter Lang, 1998) Vol. 1, p.278 The newspaper article is "Professor Fowler," from the ' Brooklyn Eagle,' March 11, 1846. I suggest Whitman is punning on ' professor,' suggesting that rather than having professorial rigour, he merely mouths claims, or professes. It was of course part of both Fowlers' self presentation that they were eager to don the mantle of academic expertise.

CHAPTER THREE

To Boldly Promulgate the Laws

This chapter proposes that in a letter of 1852 written to John Parker Hale, Whitman reveals the idealised young political audience he wished to challenge and assist. The nuance of Whitman's stance in the letter, acknowledging the oratory of politicians whilst also seeking a model for his own poetic will be established. Further delineation of his youthful audience will follow from notebook entries prior to 1855 and 1856. The significance of his addressing the putative audience of the letter, that of the notebooks and that of the key poems discussed in previous chapters in a poetic discourse linked to mental therapeutics will be examined. A key issue, addressed in the previous chapter, will be kept under review: Whitman's maintenance of a liberating and empowering mode of instruction, carefully differentiated from more pedagogic models available to his contemporaries.

Through a brief examination of the advice books of Rev. George Weaver a key theme in his work and typical of mind-cure texts, that of disciplining and controlling the mind, will be identified. Weaver will be located within the wider movement of popularised phrenology whose key figures Fowler and Wells are central to this study. In order to move on to a fuller examination of key texts in which Weaver, the Fowlers and others guided and disciplined the young, two preliminary tactics will be employed. Firstly, the examination of the importance to Whitman, to Fowler and Wells and to phrenologists of the key concept of 'promulgation' of mental laws, a theme foregrounded in the Hale letter. Secondly, a critical survey will be undertaken

of the findings of two scholars, Reynolds and Zweig, to suggest their examination has begun the exploration of the relationship of advice books and phrenology to Whitman's poetry without fully documenting the dynamics of the relationship.

In the case of Reynold's claims that Whitman borrowed models of self regulation from phrenology to bring to order his own sexual perturbations, it will be suggested that this is to privilege the personal and confessional above the radically oppositional stance to phrenology, which is an essential part of Whitman's engagement with phrenology as a science of the mind, and consequently, to lose focus on his radical opposition to its disciplinary therapeutic. In the case of Zweig's contention that Whitman strove to find a visionary moral therapeutic within phrenology, this will be critically evaluated. It will be proposed that his approach shares some significant common purpose with the present study which will facilitate further exploration.

In the summer of 1852 Whitman wrote a letter to John Parker Hale, a New Hampshire senator who had accepted nomination as a Free Soil candidate. Whitman was at pains to ensure that Hale continued to accept the nomination. Despite being only "a word from a stranger," Whitman's earnest advice to the senator was, he felt, worthy of attention, as it came from "a young man, and a true Democrat, I hope." The letter reveals Whitman's desire for a new Democratic party to be born. It clearly demonstrates that the model for such a movement to come into being is to be drawn from the Jeffersonian era.[1]

Of special significance within the letter is Whitman's delineation of just who in the body politic the senator should appeal to, and how, by focusing on this group, he might strengthen his cause. The opening of the third paragraph has a zeal and even

bravado which closely resembles what was to emerge in *Preface to Leaves of Grass (1855)*, as Whitman calls to the youth of that time:

> It is from the young men of our land – the ardent, and generous hearts – that these things are to come.[2]

In the depth of this paragraph, as Whitman eagerly fires off advice to Hale – "look to the young men – appeal specially to them," and, "enter into this condition... With spirit too," – he offers one direct challenge to Hale which I suggest is revelatory concerning Whitman's own notion of his role as a poet and his thinking concerning his relation to his audience.

Whitman insists that the politician must operate through "personal addresses" to the young people and these must contain "principal ideas". Whitman is addressing a politician in an era when public speaking and public persuasion were central to politics and politicians made frequent orations. Yet while Whitman insists that the content must consist of "your fullest radicalism", surprisingly the advice given on frequency is that only two or three "occasions" are necessary. I suggest the reasons for this perplexing advice lie in the close identification the poet is making between himself as poet and the politician as orator (so potent is the message that it is best distilled into two or three poem-speeches).

The closeness of this identification and its precise nature can best be ascertained by examining a key term employed in the letter and at crucial moments in Whitman's poetry and prose works - the verb to 'promulge':

> Boldly *promulge* these, [the principal ideas] with that temper

> of rounded and good-natured moderation which is peculiar to you...How deeply they[the people] love the man that *promulges* such principles with candor and power. [emphasis added][3]

Webster's 1828 dictionary carries definitions both of "Promulge" and "Promulgate". Those entries are, in full:

> PROMULGE, v.t. to promulgate; to publish or teach
> (Less used than promulgate).
>
> PROMULGATE, v.t. To publish: to make known by open declaration as, to promulgate the secrets of a council. It is particularly applied to the publication of laws and the gospel. The moral law was promulgated at Mount Sinai. The Apostles promulgated the gospel. Edicts, laws and orders are promulgated by circular letters, or through the medium of the public print[4]

It is certain that Whitman retained a copy of this dictionary throughout his life and used a later version regularly.[5] He shared a belief in the direct spiritual resonance of words with Webster himself, and with the Christian Evangelical group who have recently placed the 1828 version online for use.[6]

The entry for the more recent of the two words, "promulgate", contains definitions relating to the open declaration of laws, particularly, but not exclusively, in terms of the gospels, thus allowing the possibility that laws of the mind could fall within the scope of the term. 'Promulge' shares a similar range of reference but has in Whitman's case a bonus, which I suggest triggers its use in the letter to Hale: it allows the addition of an advisory, a teaching, dimension to the main meaning of the open declaration of a spiritual law.

Whitman is, in fact, under the guise of offering advice to Hale, prefiguring some of the details of his own poetic. Of a number of references in notebooks that can be dated to the 1840-1845 period, perhaps the most revealing are two where Whitman

answers his own question as to what is the true test and educational purpose of a poem. The question and the answer are adjacent in the notebook "albot Wilson":

> Test of a poem
> How far it can elevate, enlarge, purify, deepen and make happy the Attributes of the body and soul of a man,

which is immediately preceded by,

> These are the thoughts of all men …
> If they are not the school of all things physical, moral and mental, they are nothing [7]

Several claims made here for poetry are of interest, linking as they do to Whitman's considerations concerning the promulgation of laws with a pedagogic hue. Firstly, while the purpose of poetry is seen as to provide "happiness" it must do so in a manner which is instructional in a very rarefied, ("elevate enlarge, purify") and moral manner. Secondly, whilst the poetic output is insistently democratic, imitating the "thoughts of all men", the pedagogic dimension of this output, these thoughts, is emphasised – "the school of all things".

Webster's 1828 dictionary is organised so that for each entry for an individual word there is also provided details of the other words in the dictionary in whose definition that original word features. For PROMULGATE these are, "proclaim/ promulge/ publish/ set." The modern Webster gives one meaning of promulgate as, "to put into action a law," and the OED yields a meaning, "to expose to public view."[8] These more recent examples can be seen as emerging from the earlier citation – "known by open declaration" – and together provide an intriguing range of reference emanating from 'promulge'.

It is a range – to expose and publish; to place in motion a law which through instruction will elevate, make healthier and happier the recipients – attractive to a young aspiring poet, to one not averse to advising politicians, and keen to fashion a poetic which would, quite literally *embody* instruction on the laws of health and happiness.

In the letter, and, I wish to suggest, in key poems in *Leaves of Grass*, "to boldly promulge" can be understood as a description of Whitman's poetic praxis: in the light of the exploration of the lexicographical range of promulge and promulgate it can be understood as indicating for the poet/politician a process involving a candid setting forth, a publishing and proclaiming of a self-demonstrating high spiritual and mental laws to others. It will be of importance that, in the poems where this poetic is fleshed out in master classes of mental therapeutics, Whitman seeks to establish a promulgation drawn on, but distinctive from, the pedagogic disciplines of popular phrenology.

Commentators on Whitman's relation to New York have been quick to draw on the observations concerning the city and its inhabitants in the letter.[9] It has been seen as evidence of Whitman's definition of what it is to "know the people". It has been seen as evidence of Whitman's strong belief that, in the "tens of thousands of young men," beats "the real heart of the city." Most significantly it has been seen as affording an insight, almost a desperate desire on Whitman's part, to wish to believe that New York remains "the most radical city in America" since:

> ...under and behind the bosh of the regular politicians, there burns, almost with fierceness, the divine fire which, more or less, during all ages, has only waited a chance to leap forth and confound the calculations of tyrants,

> hunkers, and all their tribe. At this moment, New York is the most radical city in America.[10]

My suggested reading of the full implications of the letter places the emphasis elsewhere, in order to bring out the fullest implication of what Whitman is writing. It proposes the letter reveals Whitman working through, under the guise of encouraging Hale, his own vision of how to approach the young men of the city in order to instruct them as to how their "divine fire" might be lit, how they might be ignited mentally, in defiance of "hunkers" peddling their wares.

In the final paragraph of the letter Whitman's main purposes become even more apparent, his stance toward the nature of what is at hand for both himself and the politician being revealed as complex. He pointedly reminds Hale that the "souls of the people" can be influenced. At the same time he teasingly plays with the senator in the last sentence: Whitman is here "in and out of the game" of political flattery.

First Whitman explains the directness and depth of the effect a politician could have on his audience - "the souls of the people ever leap and swell" in a very muscular image. He next intensifies the claimed effect by describing the response within the audience thus:

> and how deeply they love the man that *promulges*
> such principles with candor and power. [emphasis added]

Whilst happy to give advice to the politician, he is just as intent on using this opportunity to work through his own feelings concerning how the poet might reach these souls. Whitman somewhat impishly suggests that all politicians cannot, as yet, discover the direct route to "there":[11]

> It is wonderful in your keen search and rivalry for popular favor,
> that hardly any one discovers this direct and palpable road there.

In what is undoubtedly a carefully crafted paragraph, "there" refers back to, "a great liberal thought or principle." I suggest that Whitman has in mind not just liberal concepts such as emancipation or democratic equality, but, also, a poetic which would be liberating for its audience. This, he was coming to see, would involve the poet promulging spiritual laws and truths to an audience in a direct and candid way. One of the truths, one of the "roads" would be the liberating power of the mind to think positive thoughts concerning the self. In previous chapters I have explored the dynamics of Whitman shaping his discourse in order to hold what I termed a "Master Class" in positive and therapeutic thinking in "Poem of the Road" and "Poem of Many In One". This final section of the letter is, I suggest, prefiguring, in very general terms, the therapeutic enterprise of those poems.

The date of the letter places it at a time four years prior to the publication of these poems in 1856. This gap allows for the possibility that, in 1852, Whitman is still striving to hold on to a belief that political rhetoric, once shaped as promulgation, can rekindle the souls of the young men of his time, whilst beginning to think that only the poet may be capable of this feat. The poems of 1855 and 1856 are thus crafted with a background of struggle in their wake.

The complexity of what Whitman is about in the final paragraph becomes clear if we examine closely the suggestiveness of the carefully-weighted last sentence of the letter. The accusatory sting is in the opening "It is wonderful" carrying as it does a suggestion of feigned amazement, whilst leaving open the possibility, picked up in the rest of the sentence, that the way is left open for other poetical "true Democrats"

to follow the candid advice-giving and law-giving route. 'Direct' has an importance that has already been explored; 'palpable' is equally resonant. It hints, perhaps, that only Whitman has an intimate knowledge of the approach he advocates, only he has felt its power. It suggests that the route to the souls of the young men will consist of a poetic which can generate such power.

A close examination of key passages in Whitman's notebooks around the time he was crafting the first two editions of *Leaves of Grass* establishes a continuation, at that time, of his interest in the mental well being of his youthful contemporaries. In Notebook 926, dated to 1855, or early 1856, we find the grand vision:

> What is now wanted in these states – and what will be wanted, hundred years hence, and ever so many hundred years hence – is clear-eyed, well-informed, *healthy-brained*, bold-mouthed men ... [who] walk sternly on with their own divine conviction of what is right[12] [emphasis added]

Here we can sense the demand that these paragons are politically and culturally attuned – "well-informed" - and morally wise –"divine conviction of what is right." Of equal importance is a form of physical well-being, suggested in "clear-eyed".[13] Most tantalising of all is "healthy-brained", suggestive, as it is, of mental wellbeing, without it being specified how that state of health might be achieved.

A notebook which has received a considerable amount of critical attention as a source of Whitman's major themes in *Leaves of Grass* is "Talbot Wilson".[14] The opening page holds a defiant vision of the potential of the youth of America:

> Every American young man should carry himself with the finished and haughty bearing of the greatest ruler and

> proprietor – for he is a great ruler and proprietor
> – the greatest……..
> Play your muscle and it will be lithe as caoutchouch and strong
> as iron – I wish to see American young men the workingmen,
> carry themselves with a high horse[15]

As discussed earlier, what is revealed here are deliberations on poetry's power to promote self-esteem which, tellingly, insist that the poetic output takes a form attuned to the thinking processes of all men:

> These are the thoughts of all men in all ages and lands –
> They are not original with me – they are mine – they are yours just
> the same
> If these thoughts are not for all they are nothing
> If they do not enclose everything they are nothing
> If they are not the school of all things physical, moral and
> mental, they are nothing[16]

However what happens when this notebook entry becomes source material for the 1855 and 1856 versions of "Song of Myself" is interesting; it is adopted but it is also adapted, with the final line of the entry is abandoned and replaced by the following two lines:

> If they are not the riddle and the untying of the riddle, they
> are nothing,
> If they are not just as close as they are distant, they are nothing.[17]

What is lost with this change to the contribution to "Song of Myself" is Whitman's clear directive to himself that his poetic should have a pedagogic intent in offering advice concerning health, morality and mental well-being. The precise nature of what is gained in the other poems where I have suggested this notebook entry is influential, can be established by locating the modified section and its final line's suggestion of mental intimacy alongside the adjacent sections of the 1855 poem.

What is important to notice is the alignment of this meditation on thought

to other key themes. This combination makes section seventeen a keynote section of the poem. In 1855 the next three lines are:

> This is the grass that grows wherever the land is and the water is,
> This is the common air that bathes the globe.
> This is the breath of laws and songs and behaviour[18]

The full significance of this last line will form an important part of my study suggesting as it does that the poetic is, at one and the same time, natural, linked to the body's essential rhythms and a dispensation of law concerning how one should act to stay healthy. The alignment of "breath", closely linked to "the thoughts of all men", with the grass which is the central symbol of the poem and with a bathing, rejuvenating, natural air flow helps suggest a place for thought which is essentially therapeutic. I suggest that the changes made from the notebook entry are designed to foreground this healthy and natural mental rejuvenation, which still retains a mental dimension.

M Wynn Thomas has characterised the reader's engagement with some of Whitman's poems as an invitation accepted to a poem operating as a "gymnasium".[19] In the opening section of "Talbot Wilson", discussed earlier, the injunction to young men to "play your muscle" can be taken to apply to mental exercising, undertaken to promote mental strength as well as physical well being. That this might be the case becomes more feasible when we note that the next comment in the notebook picks up on the instruction on how to achieve 'haughty bearing,' asking:

> Where is the being of which I am the inferior? It is the of
> the sly or shallow to divide men like the metals into those

> more precious and others less precious, intrinsically I never yet knew how it felt to think I stood in the presence of my superior.[20]

In one of his rejected introductions to later editions to *Leaves of Grass* Whitman is quite explicit concerning the robust mental exercise he wishes to provide for his idealised reader:

> But of SUGGESTIVENESS, out of the miracles of every day, with new centripetal reference this is the song – naught made by me for you, but only hinted, to be made by you by robust exercise. I have not done the work, and cannot do it. But you must do the work to and make what is within the following song[21] [22] [emphasis in original]

The health-giving potential of poetry is celebrated in another notebook entry, considered by Grier to be dated pre 1860:

> (if perfect health appear in a poem, or any book, it propogates itself a great while) Show health, and native qualities, and you are welcome to all the rest –[23]

The suggestion contained in the term 'propagate' is that the health grows in a natural manner when the reader engages with what is offered up through robust exercise on his or her part.

The notebook entries, the tortured ruminations in the "Preface" (1855), the careful exposition of the power of the mind in key poems of 1856 all suggest Whitman has engaged in a complex project to connect with the young men and women of his time, those he was already thinking of in the Hale letter. Whitman is carving out a poetic of therapeutic potential in relation to and, at the same time, in reaction to his times

and to those restrictive elements of his culture which sought to bring a sense of health and succour to citizens. At the same time he is engaging with the problem of how to raise the self esteem of the recipients of his poetic message.

Whilst the middle of the century has been described as a time awash with advice material to those anxious about their behaviour, character and health,[24] it is possible to approach those advisory voices and gauge the rigid mechanics of control that lay within their messages of succour through study of selected key figures

The major figure I would like to turn to is the Reverend G. S. Weaver. It is illuminating to approach him, as it were, from the inside since he published widely through the famous phrenological firm of Fowler and Wells,[25] and one major outlet from that firm for forty years was *The American Phrenological Journal.* The entry on him in that journal's regular series of phrenological portraits can be read as a model of the ideal advice-giver, and also assists us in understanding what informs his advice giving. The biographical sketch of Weaver which forms the first section of the entry on him carefully plots a career path which led to his publishing advice books; first a school teacher, then a thwarted student of law, then a pursuer of geological knowledge, then a successful legal career, followed by the rejection of the lure of newspaper editing for a phrenological ministry in St Louis. The key passage in this narration of his journey is:

> Phrenology and its kindred sciences had early engaged his attention, and the study thereof only served to assure him of the truthfulness of their laws. During his employment as a teacher, he had frequent opportunity and occasion to compare the capacities, the conduct, and general character of the pupils under his charge with their cranial developments; and the comparison

> only the more firmly fixed the idea he had before received of the value of phrenological science in practical life.[26]

Here we can clearly feel a positivist stamp being applied to the life history. Weaver, in the practical life of a teacher, seizes on the opportunity to observe the presence of a mechanistic link between those crania set before him for instruction and the behaviour of their owners. Phrenology, as he applies it in his phrenological ministry, validates the law he has deduced from his experience. The phrenological portrait which accompanies the biography is also revealing. Whilst there is a quite frenetic tallying off in respect of phrenological faculties – "one of his largest organs is Comparison" and "Form, Size, Order and Locality are all large", etc. – two key 'readings'[27] are relevant to Weaver's career as the writer of advice books for contemporary young people. First there is the dramatic opener:

> The above likeness indicates a very decided character .... The mental temperament seems to have the ascendancy. The head is high yet broad; giving executive power as well as governing moral principles.

This is followed by readings which place emphasis on the heavy weight of order and integrity Weaver can bring to bear:

> Everything is scrutinised, compared with other things and criticised. There is a *strong desire to reduce every thing to order*, system, and harmony ... The moral organs are all large, but Conscientiousness and Firmness are most prominent, giving great stability of character and the strictest integrity.[28] [emphasis added]

Weaver was the author of several advice books which bore the Fowler and Wells imprint and went through numerous editions. An examination of the style of his instruction establishes the particular nature of that advice, atypical popularised phrenological advice. The validation of him in his Portrait as an advice-giver, as a

man 'always reducing everything to order', is borne out. It is easily established that he is a man who allows little scope for his young audience to undertake the 'robust exercise' Whitman had called for.

In his introduction to *Hopes and Helps* Weaver demonstrates, in a style that bears all the hallmarks of the inflated exposition typical of popularised phrenology, his awareness of the gravity of his mission to educate the young:

> No position in the minister's or the author's life is more responsible than that of lecturer or essayist to youth..... if a man should ever tremble, it should be when he essays to impress convictions upon youthful minds....A thought struck into a young mind![29]

The trope of the conviction of the earnest minister being 'impressed' on the youthful mind and of this same conviction, when formulated as thoughts, being 'struck into' the receptive mind is worthy of attention. It suggests the earnestness and conviction of the essayist-teacher but also the wilful determination to implant with almost physical force correct and correcting thoughts into the youthful mind. This conception of instruction is a long way from Whitman's trope of propagation as best suited to describe the health-giving power of two minds meeting.

The approach Weaver arrived at through his laborious rumination on the very first page is carried through on every page of the individual lectures that make up the book. Of most interest in terms of mental therapeutics is lecture two – 'Meditation.' The chapter's organisation is of a piece with a mechanistic view of the mind and of a form of mechanistic instruction that might speak to the mind. Each page has a heading informing the reader the instruction relevant to that page. Of interest is a page headed 'noble, self-poised mentality,' at the centre of which is:

> Who has not met with people whose every word is well-timed, whose every action is so appropriate, whose every look beams with the evidences of such inward propriety, that they possess almost the power of captivation? Such we occasionally meet, and we meet them with open arms, and give them at once the confidence of old and long-tried friends. They should be our examples. We should impress their characters upon our own hearts. Now, this charm that dwells about such persons is the result of this *self-directing inward control,* of which we are speaking. He who would be interesting to others, who would be truly great; who would possess a strong, noble in-dwelling virtue must control himself. And to do this he must meditate upon himself, study his own soul as he would a book, and determine all his internal forces according to enlightened judgement and rectitude.[30] [emphasis added]

The power of the passage turns on the importance given to "self-directing inward control". Those in possession of this quality captivate any onlooker, it is claimed, and so, when we encounter them we must allow those who are, consequently, beaming with 'inward propriety' to work on us. What the recipient must do to aid this process is to meekly allow the impress of such a template of character on "our own hearts". We are to model those who, literally, impress us; this requires no interaction on our part, just a photographic[31] reproduction of what can be achieved by the means of internal self-control. That this outcome – achieved through observing others, then meditating on the self – is an act of repression and control is hammered home in the final warning that it is only possible through 'rectitude'.

It is important to remember that beneath the bombast and rhetorical flourish this is a serious attempt to explain to young people how to think, how to think about themselves, in Weaver's terms, how to 'meditate upon themselves.' Weaver moves on quickly to a demonstration of how we might "control our deportment at will": [32]

> What study of oneself, what thoughtfulness, what meditation on the true excellencies of character, and what summoning of all the guards and forces of virtue within, are requisite to attain such control. [33]

Here 'thoughtfulness' is not about a searching and just consideration of one's own individual position, one's strengths and weaknesses. It cannot be since any consideration of careful and exhaustive self-scrutiny is submerged beneath the imperative concern to study the self in order to keep that self safe and in a state of control. Learning to think about oneself and channelling thought to the aim of being 'self-poised' is, as the page heading has it, reaching for 'self-poised mentality.'

What this examination of Weaver's method of exposition of the merits of such a form of mental self-scrutiny shows is that it shares several features with the phrenological portrait of Weaver. It is the suggestion of this study that all of these features – the mechanistic imposition of a model of behaviour, the privileging of self-control over any other form of regulation, and the superficial level at which self-scrutiny is postulated – stand in direct contrast to what Whitman sought in offering to his readers a version of mental therapeutics in poems in 1855 and 1856. Whitman's alternative instruction involved the promulgation of laws of the mind, which as the Hale letter indicates, sought to reach and kindle the individual 'divine spark' in his readership. Where a very anxious Weaver is impressing rigid self-control on his readers, Whitman wishes to work in another, more liberating, manner altogether, as this notebook entry testifies:

> I am not so anxious to give you the truth. But I am very anxious to have you understand that all truth and power are feeble to you except your own.[34]

Harold Aspiz has usefully, and very comprehensively, summarised many of the benefits Whitman gained from his exposure to Fowler and Well's particular mediation of phrenology for an American market:

> Phrenology helped Whitman to present his poetic image to the world and to formulate a definition of poetry. It crystallised his belief that the poet must be a cynosure of manly vigour, whose perfect brain contains those powerful faculties – Ideality, Self-Esteem, and Individuality – which enable him to test the world of experience against his instinctive sense of an ideal world and to correlate material data with spiritual truths. It reinforced his concept that a poet must be a man of perception and feeling rather than a trained or eloquent writer. And it helped him to define the artist as one who beholds the similitudes of inner being in the physical appearances of men and women and to advertise himself as one whose body is an emblem of his own physical excellence, for, as one phrenologist declared, phrenology is the science of "the outward symbols of the mind, the study of the mind's language.[35]

There are many useful insights here as to Whitman's presentation of himself as poet, but little consideration of how Whitman's exposure to popularised phrenology might have assisted him, not to merely define and refine his role as a poet, but also in devising models of how to talk to the audience, and of how to advise them on the potential which lay untapped within them. However, in a later book, Aspiz has put forward an overview of the 1856 edition of *Leaves of Grass* in relation to phrenology and phrenological self-help books which has important insights which this study seeks to develop:

> The 1856 edition of *Leaves of Grass* not only has the outward appearance of a Fowler and Wells self-help manual but it also reflects some of the firm's ideologies. The handsomely produced volume is the most popularistic edition of the poems. Some of its new poems picture the Whitman persona as a teacher-confessor who adopts the pose of a guru addressing a working-class crowd that is eager to take his hand and hear his reassurance that they, as self-reliant Americans, are eligible for physical and spiritual advancement.[36]

The self-reliance of his followers are indeed enhanced, they are, indeed provided with reassurance, particularly in *Leaves of Grass (1856)*. This study proposes to chart how this is achieved by Whitman focusing on mental therapeutics, reflecting and opposing 'the firm's ideologies.'

There here have been a number of approaches to Whitman which have stressed some kind of indebtedness to the popularised phrenology as found in works written by and published by Fowler and Wells. Their major claim has, most frequently, been Whitman's use of Adhesiveness as a key term in his depiction of the comradely love which is to be the kelson of his idealised democracy. The focus of this study, however, lies elsewhere, in the examination of Whitman's complex relation to the discourse of mental therapeutics available in popularised phrenology, and the examination of a Whitman at once fiercely intent on avoiding the mechanistic order and control to be found in such advice material, whilst also indebted to the populist texts for their seeking to address the question of human potential.

I wish to examine the important insights of two major critics who have sought to explore Whitman's relation to Fowler and Wells' particular, mediated version of phrenology in terms of Whitman seeking a model for how to address anxious Americans of the 1850's. Of importance to this study is the emphasis on the self-control aspect of popularised phrenology, in the case of David Reynolds, and on the potential within popularised phrenology of a therapeutic vision of self-making, in the case of Paul Zweig.[37]

David Reynolds is interested in the aspect of self-control that is made available in key self-help texts, but his focus is not on the implications of this for the youthful readers of such texts, but on the effect on Whitman himself. Reynolds dates Whitman's first exposure to and interest in Fowler's work to 1846 – "Whitman caught the phrenological bug in 1846," and clearly appreciates Whitman's absorption of one of Fowler's key themes – "exulting in Fowler's idea that any mental faculty could be developed through exercise."[38] Drawing on evidence from the notebooks, he demonstrates Whitman's continuing interest, clarifying the importance to him of the populist, self-help version made available:

> The Fowlers had changed phrenology, mainly an intellectual concern abroad, into a popular program for self-help. In their efforts to Americanise phrenology they simplified it and made it utilitarian, much to the chagrin of their counterparts in Europe, who dismissed them as panderers to the masses.[39]

This a view echoed both by Wrobel,

> Phrenology promised to identify man's self-governing and moral faculties and to design ways of strengthening them in preparation for enlightened self-rule,[40]

and Davies:

> Like Unitarianism, Universalism and Transcendentalism, phrenology taught that sobriety and virtue, chastity and self-improvement were the keys to the good life. The musty earnestness of its books preached self-culture and self-improvement to such a degree that they read like parodies of Dale Carnegie.[41]

There is no doubt that Fowler and Wells were key players in providing their considerable readership with manuals for self-improvement. Indeed the best-selling, encyclopaedic, book in their stable – which luxuriates in the magnificently grandiose title of *New Illustrated Self-Instructor in Phrenology and Physiology, with 100 Engravings and a Chart of the Character* – is a very labyrinth of interlocking

sections offering a practical guide as to how the eager reader might arrive at the cultivation of just that correct combination of attributes and propensities of the mind which meet his or her needs.

Whilst Reynolds places due emphasis on self-improvement, this forms only a small part of his investigation as his major interest is in self-regulation. It is an approach to examining the interlocking of Whitman and the phrenology of Fowler, which focuses, not on the poetry, but on the notebooks.[42] Reynolds is interested in the potential imbalance within the attributes of the brain postulated in phrenology, and in Fowler's claim that this dysfunction can be controlled through the particular application of "vigorous self-reprimand".[43]

He selectively uses Fowler on masturbation to argue for Whitman's adoption, in the notebooks, of a particular graphic device and a discourse format suitable for such reprimand. The attraction to Whitman, he claims, is the emphasis, in print, of the strength of exhortation required:

> TOTAL ABSTINENCE IS LIFE; animal, intellectual, moral. INDULGENCE IS TRIPLE DEATH! RESOLUTION DETERMINATION TO STOP NOW AND FOREVER – is your starting point; without which no other remedial agents will avail anything. ABSTINENCE OR DEATH is your only alternative. STOP NOW AND FOREVER, or abandon all hope.[44] [emphasis in original]

This format, he claims, can be seen in the now famous 1861 notebook entry where, he claims, Whitman is using this convention to administer to himself a severe self-reprimand in an attempt to re-gain control of his enflamed adhesiveness, which had taken the form of homosexual attraction to Doyle:

> TO GIVE UP ABSOLUTELY *& for good from the present hour, this* FEVERISH,FLUCTUATING,*useless,* UNDIGNIFIED PURSUIT *OF 164* (Peter Doyle) – *too long (much too long)* persevered in, -so humiliating - - *It must come at last and* had better come now – (*It cannot possibly be a success*) LET THERE FROM THIS HOUR BE NO FALTERING, NO GETTING *at all henceforth* (NOT ONCE, *under any circumstances*) – *avoid seeing her* (originally "him"), *or meeting her; or any talk or explanations* – or any MEETING WHATSOEVER FROM THIS HOUR FORTH, FOR LIFE[45] [emphasis in original]

Reynolds characterises this advice-giving, which he sees as taken to a pitch of lacerating self-exhortation as, "[Whitman] used instead the discourse of phrenological self-regulation, as popularised by his friends the Fowlers," in order to, "bring this inflamed inclination under control, to regain mental equilibrium."[46]

I have suggested in a previous chapter that Whitman did not merely adopt the Fowlers' mechanistic philosophy of mental therapy. Reynolds' well made case clearly demonstrates deep personal adoption by Whitman of one aspect of Phrenology, the self-regulatory one. However it does so at the expense of any consideration of Whitman's critique of the mental therapeutics of phrenology with its emphasis on self-control. Indeed the Whitman of this notebook is revealed as adopting from phrenology the very mode of disciplined self-regulation which he campaigned for his own readers to reject.

An examination of the concluding comments in Reynolds' passage dealing with phrenology exposes the limitations of his approach. Whitman is seen, as a result of adopting the discourse rules analysed, to be "a person in equilibrium," exercising "his faculty of caution." Indeed Whitman is represented as attaining a "posture of

cool detachment," in which state he is able to, "calm both private and social turbulence."[47]

I suggest this is an approach which bears little relation to the Whitman of the Preface and of the key poems of 1855 and 1856. There the poetic contains a fervid attempt to help others reach out to their mental potential in order to alleviate social pressures and improve their self-esteem; the cry, "allons!" being a call to fulfilment, mental and spiritual. Reynolds can only offer a Whitman desperately grasping "affirmations of equilibrium," the attainment of which have "stemmed from the therapeutic programs presented by the scientific theorists of the time."[48]

It is necessary to turn to the work of Paul Zweig and his passionate and detailed biography of Whitman, in order to move from the restricted approach adopted by Reynolds to a more expansive approach, which portrays a Whitman joyously absorbing self-help "programs" in order to challenge his readership to effect personal change.

In his introduction, Zweig uses the famous passage from the Preface, "This is what you shall do... and joint of your body,"[49] to exemplify what he claims is the "plane" on which Whitman and his reader meet, "a plane of generous impulse, of – in Whitman's terms – 'nature'. The place of meeting in the poem – a kind of Jacob's ladder leading upward into health, sympathy, fearlessness".[50]

The biblical trope clearly indicates Zweig's emphasis on Whitman offering his readership a secular evangelical message in keeping with:

> America's public rhetoric (which) was evangelical, whether it spoke of manifest destiny, moral reform, slavery, sectional conflict, even personal health.[51]

"Generous impulse" is a wonderfully insightful phrase to describe the care, consideration and even love that Whitman brings to the plane on which he meets his reader, even as he is attempting to instruct him or her in a routine which involves training the mind to think positively.[52] In a previous chapter it was suggested that at the climax of "Poem of The Road" Whitman crafted just such an invitation, ensuring his master class in thinking was replete with love.

Zweig's clear intent is to flesh out the "long foreground," referred to by Emerson, in order to understand what experiences Whitman drew on from his various jobs and roles – including editor, carpenter, teacher, spectator of the city - preceding the publication of *Leaves of Grass* in 1855. Zweig is seeking to identify those elements in Whitman's culture which he drew on as a resource in order to create his particular stylistic features: although he astutely identifies the theatre as a strong influence, he also devotes considerable attention to phrenology as Whitman encountered it in publications by Fowler and Wells. Zweig identifies a 'moral imperative' driving Whitman's poetic:

> He believed passionately in the moral import of his poetry. He believed, as few writers ever have, that a poem's true aim is to change a man's life to make him anew by inviting him to *share, in a mode of intimate love, the poet's own remade personality.*[53] [emphasis added]

The purpose of this present study is to identify a Whitman driven by just such a belief, and to explore the links and collisions between such a poetic and therapeutic mind cures from phrenology to New Thought and Christian Science. In addition a key task is to validate Zweig's insight concerning the moral import of the poet sharing his remade personality. Zweig's insights are useful in identifying how Whitman grafted a "mode of intimate love" into the task of fashioning a mental therapeutic in the dark shadow of phrenology.

Zweig patiently catalogues a whole range of influences phrenology had on Whitman as the poet strove to share his own remaking with his readership. Firstly, he looks for a level of awareness on Whitman's part which goes beyond what he calls "the fundamental outlook of phrenology …the phrenological 'chart of bumps', one of Whitman's 'found' catalogues." He details "less visible but probably more important references."[54] Significant amongst these are some, shared with this study, where in the *1855 Preface* reference is made to the mind and the brain – especially in the case of the first eight paragraphs of that text.

Whilst he does not pass comment on the section, "His (the great poet's) thoughts are the hymns of the praise of things,"[55] he does claim that when Whitman says, only two lines earlier, "his brain is the ultimate brain," and again, on the next page, just prior to the famous section starting, "This is what you shall do," "All beauty comes from beautiful blood and a beautiful brain,"[56] that, "he was thinking as a phrenologist."[57]

Zweig suggests the need for a shift in emphasis away from almost exclusive attention to the workings of the body to one where the body is seen, "as a source of mental vitality."[58] He brings to his analysis the crucial comment Whitman made in his 1846 review of *The Use of the Body in Relation to the Mind*, by George Moore, the health reformer, "Few persons realise how intimate (is) the relation of mental causes and processes toward the body and its well or ill being." He argues convincingly that the Fowlers shared with Whitman this viewpoint, further characterised by him as being one where:

> "Not only did "mental causes and processes" influence the body, they did so legibly and predictably, for the body was the mind's open secret, its visible text."[59]

Zweig is very committed to tracing aspects of Whitman's poetic back to Fowlers' deliberations on mind and body; Whitman's acceptance of the intimate linking of mind and body, under discussion here, he terms Fowler's "evangelism of the body," and claims to find it writ large in the following notebook entry:

> The effusion or corporation of the soul is always under the beautiful laws of physiology I guess the soul itself can never be anything but great and pure and immortal; but it makes itself visible only through matter – a perfect head, and bowels and bones to match is the easy gate through which it comes from the embowered garden, and pleasantly appears to the sight of the world.[60]

He is quite clear in indicating the general features of the popular and evangelical mission that the Fowlers were committed to and that had some considerable influence on Whitman:

> They evangelized and popularised a form of spiritual materialism that would have startled the revolutionary poet, and their preaching bore fruit in Whitman's own fluid flighty materialism[61]

The representation of the Fowlers' very eclectic philosophy as "spiritual materialism" is a sweeping judgement, which, however, does capture some of the paradoxical aspects of their brand of phrenology. However, as this study seeks to establish, Whitman's relation to the "materialist" aspects of phrenology – the evangelical self-improvement of the social individual so as he/she may[62] prosper materially in his/her culture – is a complex matter; it is not readily reducible to "fluid flighty materialism".

Zweig's strengths lie in his focus on the individual poet's attempt to create a style and a self appropriate to a Romantic, elevated, conception of the poet's craft. In contrast to Reynolds he is committed to a conception of the poet's audience which is also a Romantic one, in that the recipient of the poetic message is agentive, dynamic and open to transformation. This ensures his reading of Whitman is of interest. It has been argued that Whitman sought to activate the "divine spark" in his readership and the therapeutic he proposed placed him in stark opposition to Weaver and other pedagogic phrenologists. It also ensures Zweig, who is in many senses a kindred spirit to Whitman, focuses on those aspects of phrenology which held potential for the individual who might seek to change.

In this regard, Zweig makes a key point concerning Fowler,

> The heart and soul of the Fowlers' enterprise was their conviction that *man can and must change.* This conviction was Orson Fowler's specific contribution to the development of phrenology,[63] [emphasis added]

and another concerning Whitman:

> He believed, as few writers ever have, that a poem's true aim is to change a man's life, to make him anew by inviting him to share, in a mode of intimate love, the poet's own remade personality[64]

Whitman shared this central belief and crafted a poetic, one built around the poet as a catalyst for change, the poet committed to convincing his readership that tapping into the power of their own minds was essential to the moral, self-improving enterprise which Zweig so carefully traces.

Zweig stresses a number of other aspects of the Fowlers' version of phrenology which are found in Whitman, and are of significance in relating to the concept that Zweig sees as the defining element in Whitman's poetic self-making. There is the emphatic message which booms out from the masthead of *The American Phrenological Journal* – "Self made or Never Made." Even a cursory examination of the opening and closing of "Song of Myself" suggests the relevance of these lines to such self-making:

> You shall not look through my eyes either, nor take things from me,
> You shall listen to all sides and filter them from yourself.[65]

And,

> If you want me again look under your bootsoles, ...
> Failing to fetch me at first keep encouraged,
> Missing me one place search another[66]

Again he emphasises that "improved behavior was not merely good, it was a form of therapy," in the view of the Fowlers and Zweig correctly identifies that the reason Whitman is drawn to a brand of phrenology that encompasses such a range is the lure of it being "phrenology with a moral amplitude."[67]

In the important tasks of insisting on a Whitman who wishes to provide moral, mental, therapeutic, support to his contemporaries and, in addition, of identifying therapy as at the centre of poems Zweig has prepared the way. In the letter to Hale, Whitman set the politician a challenge. I argued that as poet of an emerging America, he was, in large part, setting himself key tasks, discernible in the advice he gave. In fulfilling these tasks he can be seen to have been critically engaged with popular phrenology.

Zweig very neatly summarises what Whitman 'found' in the Fowlers which aided him in this task :

> .... He was looking for an idea that would give a private dimension to the exalted claims of American political life, an idea that would provide the largest conceptual scope to his own longing for personal change, he surely found it in the Fowlers' therapeutic vision, with their emphatic belief that all of man's good, and the best hopes of history, *had as their goal the inception of a completely healthy human being.*[68] [emphasis added]

Referring back to that significant letter of 1852, it can be argued that Whitman can be seen to have engaged with the challenge set there; Zweig has helped establish that this is the case and that it has been achieved by Whitman engaging with the particular phrenological beliefs of the Fowlers.

This engagement has meant that in the Preface and major poems of 1855 and 1856 Whitman is "Promulging," (in both senses, fleshing forth via instruction, and publishing a naturally empowering "law") ideas which would be delivered with "candor and power", "lighting a divine fire" in his audience.

To return to Zweig's masterful overview of Fowler's positive influence on Whitman and his delineation of Whitman's "goal" as "the inception of a completely healthy human being." Whitman never rested easily with just an 'idea' of his America, of the poet for the nation, of the citizens fit to inhabit it, so this goal is an appropriate one. Ideas are conceptions and can remain as abstract ideas if not realised, made flesh, put into action. Whitman, as Zweig argues, wanted change and for people to change their way of thinking. A key theme of this study is the investigation of Whitman's dramatisation of his desire to change ways of thinking- a drama of conception, in a sense. In "Poem of Many In One" and "Poem of The Road" he begins to move to a drama which is an 'inception' i.e. the actual moment of the beginning of change and re-orientation. These poems are, in part, dramas of the inception of a change of conception of the self, in order to accomplish the goal of 'a completely healthy human being.'

Whitman's signature poem is "Song of Myself" and any claim concerning the dramatisation of the making of a "self" must address that poem. This study argues that Whitman gains strength from fashioning his therapeutic, mental discourse, containing these dramatised inceptions, in opposition to mind-cure practices. There needs to be, therefore, an investigation into whether a similar fashioning takes place in "Song of Myself."

[1] *Selected Letters if Walt Whitman*, ed., Edwin Haviland Miller (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1990), p22-23. Whitman typically dramatises the longed for emergence of the party – "it may be that a real live Democratic party is destined to come forth" – and apportions to it a sufficiently emphatic musculature, describing it as having "thews and sinews worthy of this sublime age." He is quite certain that there is a model from the past – "Just like Jeffersonian democracy fifty years ago" (all P22 Miller).

[2] Ibid., p.22.

[3] Ibid., p.23

[4] *Webster's 1828 Dictionary, Electronic Version, CD Rom* (PO BOX 2201, Independence, MO 64055: Christian Technologies, Inc., 2002). Henceforth, 2002 Christian Technologies.

[5] Details of Whitman's interest in, recourse to, and possession of a variety of editions of Webster are to be found in Ed Folsom "Encyclopedias" in *Whitman, An Encyclopedia,* Ed Folsom, *Walt Whitman' s Native Representations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994),Ch. 1 and Kenneth Cmeil, *Democratic Eloquence* (New York: Morrow & Co., 1990), p.85.

[6] Walt Whitman, *An American Primer; With Facsimiles of the Original Manuscrit,*,Ed.Horace Traubel (London: Putnam, 1904), (Passim).

Webster declares his aims in his Preface:

> It satisfies my mind that I have done all that my health, my talents and my pecuniary means would enable me to accomplish. I present it to my fellow citizens, not with frigid indifference, but with my ardent wishes for their improvement and their happiness, and for the continued increase of the wealth, the learning, the moral and religious elevation of character, and the glory of the country.

In their product details, within their website, Christian Technologies explain the need to re-publish the 1828 version thus:

> No other dictionary compares with the Webster's 1828 dictionary. The English language has changed again and again and in many instances has become corrupt. The American Dictionary of the English language is based upon God's written word.

[7] *Notebooks and Unpublished Prose Manuscripts*, Ed., Edward Grier. 6 vols.(New York: New York University Press,1963-64), vol. I p. 79-80. As Grier notes this entry is transposed, almost entire, into "Song of Myself" (1855) ll. 355-358.

[8] OED Concise: 1. To make known to the public; disseminate; promote (a cause etc.) 2. proclaim (a decree, news etc.).

[9] M.Wynn Thomas, "Whitman's Tale of Two Cities", *American Literary History*, Vol. 6 (4), 1994; and Malcolm Andrews, "Walt Whitman and the American City" in *The American City – Literature and Culture Perspectives,* Ed. Graham Clarke (London and New York, 1998), pp. 179-197.

[10] Miller, p.23.

[11] Ibid., p.23.

[12] Grier, Vol. I p.288.

[13] This is not to ignore the wider implication of this term. It has a range of reference including clarity of vision with respect to the self and an individual's place in the scheme of things, clarity as to purpose and ability not to be beguiled or deceived by others.

[14] See Andrew C Higgins, "Wage Slavery and the Composition of Leaves of Grass: the "Talbot Wilson" Notebook": in *WWQR* Vol. 20 (2) pp. 53-75; Andrew C Higgins, "Art and Argument: The Rise of Walt Whitman's Rhetorical Poetics, 1838-1855" PhD thesis, Univ.of Mass.(1999); and Karen Halttunen, *Confidence: Men and Painted Women: a study of middle-class culture in America* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1982).

[15] Grier, Vol. I p. 56.

[16] Ibid., p.79.

[17] Variorum, I pp. 357-358.

[18] Ibid., p. 22, ll. 359-60 & 360n.

[19] *Lunar Light*, p.62

[20] Grier, Vol., 1 p.56.
[21] Ibid., Vol., 4 p.1488
[22] Whitman's cancelled jottings on this page of the introduction, Grier n. 93, are indicative of Whitman linking the robust exercise of the poem to happiness and to the revelation of soul:

> (*Passage deleted in pencil*)"which if you do by robust exercise (*three words ins. In pencil above* deleted "you...promise) I promise you return and satisfaction more than ever (*del. In pencil)* book(*two words ins. and del. In pencil above deleted* "book" *and* "be" *in* "before") printed leaves (*ins. In pencil below deleted* "book") print before has (*ins. in pencil above* "has") has given you (*deleted in ink*) "For from this book your own soul before (*ins. in pencil above* "be" *in* "before") I (*ins. in pencil and del. Following* "b") give unknown shall be revealed"

[23] Grier, Vol., 1 p. 373
[24] There is a considerable body of work documenting the importance of reform and reforming the individual. Worthy of note are Anita Clair Fellman & Michael Fellman, *Making Sense of Self: Medical Advice Literature in Late Nineteenth-Century America* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1981) ; Steven Mintz, *Moralists and Modernisers: America's Pre – Civil War Reformers* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995).
[25] Madeleine Sterne, *Heads and Headlines, The Phrenological Fowlers* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1971) documents the extent of the connection.
[26] APJ, Vol. XX (2), Aug. 1854, p.28
[27] The reading has an interesting status when judged by phrenology's own methodology. The phrenological reading when undertaken for payment on the public always involved the physical inspection of the skull. However Fowler acknowledges that only a few of the portraits were taken from live examination and insists he has the skill to 'read' his subjects from daguerreotypes and woodcuts where that is necessary. One can speculate as to whether contemporary subjects of some social standing would wish the 'scores' for each faculty being disclosed.
[28] APJ, Vol., XX (2), Aug. 1854 p. 29.
[29] Rev. G. S. Weaver, *Hopes and Helps for The Young of Both Sexes* (Fowler and Wells, New York, 1853) p. 1.
[30] Ibid., p. 38.
[31] The nature of this modelling or copying in order to instil control of the self has obvious affinities with the daguerreotype process. Critics such as Folsom and Trachtenberg have established the problematic reception of the processes involved in ante-bellum America. Chapter 4 of the present study will explore the issues that arise.
[32] It is the suggestion of mental deportment, control of one's thinking that is of most interest in Weaver's comments.
[33] *Hopes and Helps*, p. 38.
[34] Grier, Vol. I. p.80.
[35] *Body Beautiful*, p.119.
[36] Harold Aspiz, *So Long! Walt Whitman's Poetry of Death* (Tuscaloosa and London: University of Alabama Press, 2004), p.103.
[37] Paul Zweig, *Walt Whitman The Making of the Poet* (Harmonsworth: Penguin,1986) and David S. Reynolds, *Walt Whitman's America A Cultural Biography (*New York: Vintage Books, 1996).
[38] Reynolds, p.247.
[39] Ibid., p.248.
[40] Arthur Wrobel, *Pseudo-Science & Society in 19th-Century America* (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 1987), p.9.
[41] John D. Davies, *Phrenology, Fad and Science; A 19th-Century Crusade* (New Haven: Yale University Press,1955), p.165.
[42] Reynolds reduces the treasure trove that are the notebooks to being only worthy of the comment that "Some of Whitman's most revealing notebook entries show that he had learned the technique of self- reprimand." p.249.
[43] Reynolds, p.248.
[44] Ibid., p.249, citing O Fowler, *Amativeness*, p.56.
[45] Ibid., p.250. The Whitman notebook entry is NUPM II 888-90.
[46] Ibid., p.250.
[47] Ibid., pp. 250, 251.
[48] Ibid., p.251.

[49] Zweig, p.12, citing *Walt Whitman Leaves of Grass, Reader's Edition*, pp. 714, ll. 200-215.
[50] Ibid., p.12.
[51] Ibid., p.13.
[52] This generous impulse stands in stark contrast to the "plane" on which Fowler meets his readership in *The American Phrenological Journal*. Here Fowler is frequently in turn sarcastic and dismissive of those he seeks to help.
[53] Zweig, p.14. The passage Zweig cites to exemplify this invitation to remaking is the section from "Song of Myself" beginning, "Have you reckoned a thousand acres much?" The use of the ambiguity in the term "reckon" – have you stayed with a conception of the value of land and of yourself as one of material possession, or have you moved on to truly value yourself? – is similar to devices identified in chapter one of the present study.
[54] Ibid., p.92.
[55] Blodgett, Reader's Edition, p.713. ll. 144-145.
[56] Ibid., p. 713, ll. 141-142; p.714, ll. 196-197.
[57] Zweig, p.92.
[58] Ibid., p.93.
[59] Both Ibid., p.94.
[60] Ibid., p.94, citing Grier, NUPM VOL. I. p.58.
[61] Ibid., p.95.
[62] It is important to recognise how much of the evangelical advice was directed at young ladies. The Fowlers were often to be found fulminating against those young ladies of the time who committed the cardinal sin of "tight-lacing."
[63] Ibid., p.95.
[64] Ibid., p.14.
[65] Variorum I. p.3. ll. 36-37.
[66] Variorum I. p.83. ll. 1340; 1344-1345.
[67] Ibid., p.96.
[68] Ibid., p.100.

CHAPTER FOUR

SONG OF MYSELF: A RADICAL ROAD TO HAPPINESS

This chapter's first section will draw on Zweig's discussion of "Song of Myself" as an 'engine of self-making' to argue that a radical position is taken up by Whitman in the poem in relation to how his readers might attain happiness. The scope of this radical approach will be outlined in terms of Whitman's committed opposition to the alluring satisfactions of a phrenological reading. The opening of "Song of Myself" will be construed as containing an unacknowledged theme relating to thinking about the self.

In addition, in preparation for a climax where Whitman challenges the reader to think positively, it will be argued that Whitman weaves into the poem, alongside other key themes, and drawing heavily from reworking of notebook entries, a significant challenge. The challenge relates to thinking clearly, without interference from anyone who might limit the scope of one's vision. It will be suggested that the target of Whitman's implicit criticism is, again, contemporary advice books which advocated a restrictive notion of 'self-making' which Whitman consistently opposes in major poems up to 1856.

In the second section an analysis of the complex cultural reception of the early daguerreotype will assist in identifying that popular phrenology offered a restricted conception of the process. Through an examination of a case study, Spencer Cone, it will be suggested that a regular feature of *The American Phrenological Journal*, the phrenological portrait, which had as a key component the daguerreotype, constructed

a normative, pedagogic, and moral exemplar of the virtuous and great for its readership. It is argued that Whitman's refashioning of the *American Phrenological Journal*'s daguerreotype is an unacknowledged component of the frontispiece of *Leaves of Grass (1855)*. Whitman's purpose, it is suggested, is to create a challenging, complex representation of self-making which critiques phrenology's subservience to the great and the good and helps prepare the reader of "Song of Myself" for the self-making challenges of that poem.

I wish now to begin to travel a little further down one of the roads that I had previously suggested Zweig had first trod; one offering a possible route for further examination. It is a route which involves considering as central to 'Song of Myself' an act of self-making by the poet: a therapeutic and liberating act, one which is to be shared with the reader, who will be guided in understanding the demands of this challenging mental self-making by a caring and loving poet. In particular I wish to focus on analysing the manner in which Whitman places emphasis on instruction to the self concerning the important task of attaining a state of happiness, insisting mental therapeutics can be of assistance.

That Zweig's belief that concept of self-making is of central importance to reading the poem is evident from his claim that, "Song of Myself" is an engine of self-making; that I believe is the clue we must follow to unravel its story.[1] The description of the poem as an engine, suggests dynamic power, and also a blueprint to be followed, and offers a crucial insight into the workings of the poem.

When Zweig is arguing for the exhilarating complexity of 'Song of Myself" he covers much of the same ground as many Whitman scholars have trod, duly acknowledging that "The poem is a symbolic action, threaded with refrain-like commentaries on voice, body and appetite as figures for the poetic act and the cognitive life of the mind"[2] Here we glimpse an astute recognition of the considerable body of recent criticism placing emphasis on 'voice' and 'body.'[3] It is, however, in the final phrase of the claim – 'and the cognitive life of the mind'- that Zweig establishes what is, I hope, fertile, common, ground with this present study.

As noted, the phrase used by Zweig to indicate the sheer dynamism of the claimed self-making in the poem is 'engine.' This epithet can as fittingly be applied to the cultural context in which Whitman's poem can be repositioned and it will be the task of this study to demonstrate this. A central feature of the culture of Whitman's period was the proliferation of popular self help and instructional advice materials, the measure of which can be obtained by tallying the output of Fowler and Wells.[4] The firm was also the publisher of an array of advice manuals (such as Sterne catalogues) for Americans of the 1840's and 1850's manuals – and the advice afforded was immensely practical and philosophical and spiritual. It is therefore of considerable significance that the first edition of *Leaves of Grass* emerged from their stable.

At the centre of this publishing empire and linked to almost every branch of it was a deep financial and ideological commitment to phrenology This takes shape for us, literally, in the extensive range of adverts for journals of instruction books and pamphlets offering instruction and practical advice to the reader crammed into the

back pages of any edition of *The American Phrenological Journal*. Take, for example, volume XV no. 1 (January, 1852) where the back two pages offer "a complete system of hydropathy and hygiene," "A Mother's Thoughts on Parental Responsibility," "The Organic Laws" and "Shadow Land and the Seer" (a guide to dreams), "The Student, a Family Miscellany," (whose professed object is "The Physical, Moral, and Intellectual Improvement of Youth") and "The Universal Phonographer for 1852."

Arthur Wrobel has categorised the precise nature of Orson Fowler's contribution to mid nineteenth century political science:

> The greatest of American phrenologists, Orson Squire Fowler, whose career spanned forty years of aggressive phrenological entrepreneurship from the 1840's onward, regularly and systematically fused romantic Jacksonian optimism and American millenial expectations with phrenological prescriptions.[5]

Prescription is a very useful term to describe the array of offerings made to the avid reader of phrenological material. Anyone willing to undergo an examination of their 'bumps' was given a scientific chart of their scores on each of the 37 Faculties and Propensities that constituted the organs of their mind. The key attraction lay in a revelation to the willing patient of a prescription of scores within the mental typology of phrenology and also the alluring direct promise which derives from the other meaning of prescribe – to categorise a mental or physical condition in such a way as to indicate a course of remedial action.

It is, moreover, important not to minimise the forces that were unleashed by this prescription. While at the political, wider, social, level this involved mobilisation of

a whole group of reforming agents in key aspects of society's workings, from prisons to education and the issue of slavery, often with a millenarian vision of social perfectibility, on the personal level the promise was equally potent. On the personal level the contact, for hundreds of thousands of Americans, was with the individual who took the reading of the cranium, often Fowler and Wells themselves: but it was through the medium of the printed word that they had their phrenological "self" recorded so they could carry it away with them. Phrenology postulated that each of the 37 organs of the mind could be strengthened through exercise. An examination of the core text in which the reading was recorded – *The Illustrated Self-Instructor in Phrenology and Physiology* - where the inscription reads,

> Your head is the type of your mentality
> Self-knowledge is the essence of all knowledge,[6]

reveals how tantalising a prospect this epigram would have held out to any anxious individual. Indeed, in almost immediate addition on page one of the first section, Fowler indicates with audacious clarity what this self-knowledge promotes:

> But SELF-knowledge is, of all its other kinds, both the most useful and promotive of personal and universal happiness and success".[7] [emphasis in original]

A previous chapter considered the audacious discourse of Fowler in his role as editor of *The American Phrenological Journal* and that publication is central to the Fowlers' phrenological enterprise and as such it showcases phrenology's therapeutic prescription promising the individual reader happiness. In what remains the most ambitious and successful study of phrenology as a cultural phenomenon, John

Davies has argued for the benefits of a close analysis of the journal, the main proselytising organ of the Fowler empire:

> The foundation of this study has been the files of the Phrenological Journal... and the American Phrenological Journal and Miscellany... which has not been used by scholars in spite of the fact that their columns provide an epitome of phrenological concepts and a running history of the movement.[8]

A careful reading of the journal does indeed yield insights into the key concepts of phrenology and their application to a wide array of aspects of mid-century American life. It is equally important to consider the Journal, and most especially, the frequent editorial set- piece admonitions to readers and prospective readers, as instituting a particular kind of discourse. In a previous chapter there was an analysis of how Whitman absorbed and transformed some key features of this discourse in shaping his efforts to promote increased self-esteem in his readers. I suggest Whitman's "Song of Myself" is engaged in a similar enterprise in relation to what is a key promotion on the part of the journal: happiness.

An article on "Conditions of Happiness, and Causes of Misery," the first in an early number of the journal (1844) strikes the key note, which Fowler never lost, and it does so in a most interesting manner:

> That HAPPINESS is the sole object of Man's creation is rendered evident by its being the only legitimate product of every organ of his body, every faculty of his mind, every element of his nature.[9] [emphasis in original]

This is the opening salvo and by mid-article Fowler has raised the tempo and the discourse is even more emphatic and strident:

> I repeat. The legitimate function of every physical, of every mental faculty, of every element of man, is HAPPINESS, ALL happiness, *pure unalloyed, unmitigated* happiness, *and nothing else*. Man was made *solely to be happy,* to be *perfectly* happy, and *for that alone* – nor does the needle point to its pole more uniformly and certainly, than does every part of man point to this one result. No truth can be more plain, more universal, more self-evident.[10] [emphasis in original]

As Fowler explains himself, on the first page, this article is almost exclusively based on the introduction to his work, *Education and Self-Improvement,* and, essentially, the same message in the same distinctive style is to be found at two crucial points in the cycle of each and every volume of the journal – at the end of each volume and at the end of the calendar year.

Valuable though the scholarly work on phrenology has been, the error which has hitherto been made in reading Fowler and his distinctive style has been to focus in on the aspects which are hectoring, and to read this as the product of a showman loudly peddling his mental wares. A more fruitful approach is to consider more carefully what he is offering to the reader and to locate the strident insistence within a discourse that exists as a valid retort to a third party, still of importance in the culture of Fowler and Whitman's times, present without being named. Fowler indicates the nature of this "enemy" when he insists to the reader that phrenology has laws which are as powerful as any Calvinististic or Puritan schemata, and mocks such schemata for placing less emphasis on realisable, attainable, temporal happiness than his own phrenology does.[11] The mantra-like "The function of every mental faculty is HAPPINESS" is a promise that the reader need not postpone happiness, it can be had now through proper exercise of the mental faculties.

It will be argued throughout this study that Whitman's borrowings from Fowler are frequent and operate at several levels. I wish now to suggest that "Song of Myself," as printed in 1855 and 1856, can be considered as sharing a common purpose with therapeutic phrenology in offering a prescription for happiness. For the purposes of this study, establishing this will involve building on the observations on the other key poems of 1855 and 1856 already undertaken, demonstrating, once more, that Whitman is offering his contemporaries a master class in positive thinking.

Initially this will require visiting the opening lines of "Song of Myself" in the spirit of M Wynn Thomas' advice that we need to re-familiarise ourselves with contemporary aspects of Whitman's culture in order to understand the stance Whitman adopts in the opening lines. According to Thomas's analysis we need to understand the sheer force of contemporary elation concerning the possessive and materialistic self to more fully understand Whitman's achievement in both parodying such a voice, and offering an alternative. I will argue for the necessity of a similar re-engagement, but with the sheer force of the guides to happiness such as the phrenological ones which promised instant happiness. Later in this study I will examine Whitman's advice to the young of his times and suggest he takes on a particular target in Henry Ward Beecher. But in the case of "Song of Myself" the target is a typology of advice- giving, not an individual.

As is shown in *An American Primer* Whitman believed that words were battle weapons and the poet should fight over them and with them. In a previous chapter I sought to demonstrate that he fought assiduously over the word 'promulgate;' reclaiming it by forging a new range of meaning for it, defiantly, and in opposition to

conventional meanings, relating, so it seemed to him, to systems of social and theological power. In one sense the crux of "Poem of The Road" is the point where in the line, "The efflux of the soul is happiness," a radical new meaning for "efflux" suggests that happiness flows out from the soul rather than piety or divine love or light.

One way to rediscover the radical nature of the opening of "Song of Myself" is to apply a similar analytic method to key terms in the opening lines in order to ascertain the scope of the battle underway as the poem unfolds. In the 1855 edition the first three lines read thus,

> I CELEBRATE MYSELF,[12]
> And what I assume you shall assume,
> For every atom belonging to me as good belongs to you.[13]

Seldom in literature has there been a persona who sounded as happy in his self-celebration. The scope of the battle involved in defining such happy self-celebration can be appreciated by examining carefully how the term "happiness" is defined in Webster's 1828 Dictionary:

> HAPPINESS,n.(from happy) The agreeable sensations which spring from the enjoyment of good; that state of a being in which his desires are gratified, by the enjoyment of pleasure without pain; but happiness usually expresses less than felicity, and felicity less than bliss. Happiness is comparative. To a person distressed with pain, relief from that pain affords happiness; in other cases we give the name happiness to positive pleasure or an excitement of agreeable sensations. Happiness therefore admits of indefinite degrees of increase in enjoyment, or gratification of desires. Perfect happiness, or pleasure unalloyed with pain, is not attainable in this life.[14]

The final sentence here, with its heavy measured cadence, reads like a very death knell to any hope of happiness. The implication is that a person may feel quite happy, by degrees, but the 'enjoyment of good' is your safest bet. In case he/she might think that worldly felicity is an admirable and attainable goal, the remaining two definitions demand reconsideration:

2. Good luck; good fortune
3. Fortuitous elegance; unstudied grace.

As detailed in a previous chapter the manner in which this dictionary is set up, so that each word also features in the definition of a range of other words, can be illuminating of the culture of the time. "Happiness" features in no less than 182 other definitions which indicates the significance of the concept to the religious and conservative Webster. Interestingly many of these are the occurrence of negative, cautionary, definitions such as that for "astray" which is glossed as "a straying from rectitude, duty and happiness." Even when the citation is for, say, "Bliss," there is a warning that only heavenly joy deserves the term. The severity of the culture of control that besets the entries is best witnessed in the short entry, " BLISSLESS a. Destitute of bliss."

Whitman saw himself as battling against such a culture of control, his primary tactic in this battle being an insistent emphasis on sheer enjoyment, on well-being, that is transmitted by the opening three lines of "Song of Myself". In addition the second and third lines bear careful scrutiny, because, 'Assume' is a word which Webster pays careful attention to:

ASSUME,v.t.

1. To take or take upon one. It differs from receive, in not implying an offer to give.
   The God assumed his native form again.
2. To take what is not just; to take with arrogant claims; to arrogate; to seize unjustly; as to assume haughty airs; to assume unwarrantable powers.
3. To take for granted, or without proof; to suppose as a fact; as, to assume a principle in reasoning.
4. To appropriate, or to take one's self; as, to assume the debts of another.
5. To take what is fictitious; to pretend to possess; to take in appearance; as, to assume the garb of humility.

In the first definition Webster acknowledges a temporal 'taking upon' of one person by another and couples this with a state where a creator exercises his (divine) right to 'assume' in order to reveal his goodness. Both citations are of a positive nature. However, with the possible exception of definition four, the remainder provide a sorry catalogue of human frailty. It is possible to imagine Whitman listening to many a sermon where the preacher, intent on castigating his flock, took them carefully through a series of sins warning them never to presume or assume lest..... .

Therefore, when, as early as the second line of the poem Whitman uses the term 'assume,' he does so with weighted, deliberate care. The line contains the blue print of the central action of the poem, that of entering into the form and shape and mind of another human being, as the persona will do on the reader's behalf throughout the poem, in order to instruct her/him. If we examine definitions two and five from Webster, what Whitman is doing is to encourage us that he is taking warrantable powers unto himself on our behalf as he takes the appearance and possession and garb of person after person in the poem. The element of encouragement provided is evident in the subtle ambiguity of the 'shall'[15] – 'I am going to do it and so shall you,

you can do it, if you wish to do it.' We are on a road to happiness and have been shown that not only God can assume a form to demonstrate goodness.

The final line of the dynamic opening is linked to line two by a "for" which maintains the persona's encouragement that he and his pupil-reader can celebrate what is in each self, approached via the assumption of another's position to fully appreciate the ease of this identification (Webster's "take upon one" is relevant here). The line offers an explanation of the reserves of goodness that can be drawn upon to assist this process and has often been read as a token of deeply ingrained democratic faith. I suggest, however, that the line carries a secondary meaning which will have ramifications throughout the poem. The line can be read as Whitman's apparent encouragement that his ability to convey the sense of self-worth to us, and our ability to digest the message, or take the lesson, are unproblematic. Consequently the benefits will be almost instantaneous, "as good (as) belong to you."

Several concerns, moreover, should put us on our guard against taking the speaker's promise, shown in this line, literally. Firstly, Whitman consistently presents his persona as "both in and out of the game". There is every reason to believe the very opening of the poem has the persona adopting just such a stance. Secondly, and perhaps even more crucially, at the end of the poem Whitman, famously, insists "You will hardly know who I am or what I mean".[16] In addition, the analysis of Fowler's, at times almost hysterically insistent, prescription for happiness earlier does, I believe, offer a model of the kind of instant-fix instruction Whitman may have feared his audience were being encouraged to follow. His subtle message in

the first few lines is direct and powerful to the reader, but there is a veiled warning: they should not expect instant instruction and benefit, even as he recognises that readers of any phrenological instruction book will bring that expectation to the puzzling text before them.

By no means do I wish to suggest that this close reading of the opening of the poem supplants any other reading. I merely wish to suggest that in addition to many of the other fascinating challenges thrown down by Whitman at the start of the poem, it is worth considering that he is laying down a subtle and challenging prescription for happiness. Further, I suggest this challenge is a radical one, forged in opposition to some of the powerful voices in his culture, including organised religion and writers of advice manuals. Nor do I propose to suggest a new schemata for the poem in order to ensure my "theme" is thus foregrounded. I am, however, interested in establishing a method whereby it can be demonstrated that, after the opening, Whitman continues to insist to us that instructing the reader in how to think about the self as a means to finding happiness, is one of his concerns.

I propose to achieve this aim by the following means. I will attempt to establish that one of the key sections in the poem, where that most central of themes – "grass" – is foregrounded, contains a treatment of the issue of positive thought's potential to contribute to happiness. Additional support will be drawn from evidence that the theme of "schooling" is co-existent with early formulations of major themes of the poem in a major notebook. My analysis will draw on the insights of the previous chapters to reconfirm that Whitman's model of "schooling" is crafted in opposition to dictatorial, pedagogic models available in popularised phrenological texts. The

key section in question is section seventeen, and of this section Miller says, "In this transitional, recapitulative section Whitman alludes once again to the universality of 'the grass that grows wherever the land is and the water is.'"[17]

Section seventeen, however, contains much more than just a reference to this key symbol. In the 1855 edition only, it contains the following lines :

> This is the breath of laws and songs and behaviour,
> This is the tasteless water of souls... this is the true
> sustenance,
> It is for the illiterate ....it is for the judges of the supreme
> court...
> It is for the federal capitol and the state capitols,
> It is for the admirable communes of literary men and
> composers and
>
> Singers and lecturers and engineers and savans,
> It is for the endless race of working people and farmers
> and seamen[18]

The last three lines here indicate the range of recipients for the 'breath' which is to invigorate them. The first two lines measure the purpose and potency of that breath. They indicate that the very fabric of the poem, the lines, akin to the respiration of the body, as being absolutely vital for existence, contain song – the body singing. However, more significant is the suggestion that 'laws' and 'behaviour' are of equivalent significance. I suggest this is a reference to the theme I am tracing, that of readers being provided with an exposition of the fundamental laws of their being, particularly mental ones, and advice concerning how knowledge of these links to behaviour. It self-referentially points to this element within the poem up to this point.

What is to be made of the following line with its alluring promises? "True sustenance" pitches the stakes very high and anything that can provide food for the soul certainly suggests help of a spiritual nature. The puzzle, the clue, lies in "tasteless water of souls", and in offering the reader this tantalising concept I suggest that Whitman is enjoying himself. As a frequent critic of the misuse of alcohol he is hinting that what is invigorating need not be alcoholic, whilst also suggesting it would benefit from being like water. However the final clue lies within the previous seven lines concerning 'the thoughts of all men.' The sustaining substance, if that is the right word, which has spiritual resonance in that it is feeding the soul, which can intoxicate one with health and happiness, is potent thought A close examination of the following lines, those retained after 1855, will help establish this further:

> These are the thoughts of all men in all ages and lands,
> they are not original with me,
> If they are not yours as much as they are mine they are
> nothing or next to nothing,
> If they do not enclose everything they are next to
> nothing,
> If they are not the riddle and the untying of the riddle
> they are nothing,
> If they are not just as close as they are distant they are
> nothing[19].

It is worth considering carefully these deliberately enigmatic lines in relation to the opening of the poem. The first line reaffirms the ability of the recipient and the persona to have common thoughts, with the second affirming that without this commonality all is lost. The next line, I suggest, relates to the scope of shared thought and insists that it is essential that what comes into play is wide-ranging; I take this to mean that if the application of thought is not seen to solve problems then the situation is useless (worth 'next to nothing'). The next line reinforces the need

for thought, and for the output of instruction in thought, to be problem-solving. It is, perhaps the final line which is most puzzling but, it, too, relates to the central concern of what can be achieved through thought. Thoughts are 'close' in the sense that they are immediately accessible to each individual. Those that are most close, in a punning way, are your own thoughts about yourself. They are 'distant' in that, through your thoughts, you can envisage possibilities for the self, ones removed in time and place from your current social position.

I wish now to locate the origins of these lines in the Whitman notebook "Talbot Wilson", LC catalogue#80[20], in order to examine its form and status there and its interrelation with other key sections of the notebook. There it exists in this form:

> These are the thoughts of all men in all ages and lands –
> They are not original with me-they are mine- they are
> yours just the same
> If these thoughts are not for all they are nothing
> If they do not enclose everything they are nothing
> If they are not the *school* of all things physical, moral
> and *mental* they are nothing[21] [emphasis added]

It is interesting that much of the content of the notebook, concerning, as it does, thought and its application, manages to find a place, in a condensed form, in the poem. Although the last line never makes its way directly into the poem, it is significant. The claim here is one which links with that contained in the next line with its emphasis on revivifying laws. Together they foreground the potential for thoughts to be vehicles of instruction and conduits through which sustenance flows. I suggest this emphasis on instruction underpins the important issues raised in section seventeen concerning thought. In previous chapters the presence of this meditative and declarative series of statements has been linked to the Preface (1855)

and other early poems. The importance of the issues they raise is hard to underestimate.

Immediately after the section from the notebook analysed above the following lines occur:

> Test of a poem?
> How far it can elevate, enlarge, purify, deepen, and make
> happy the attributes
> Of the body and soul of a man/ [22]

To consider the litmus test of a successful poem as making happy all the attributes of both body and soul is certainly to take issue with religious orthodoxy, as was pointed out in the earlier discussion of Webster's dictionary. It is important that the lines under discussion earlier, placed as they are, immediately before the above, indicate that it is through providing an example of the sustaining power of thought that the poet may seek to pass this severe test.

The likelihood of these two adjacent entries in this notebook functioning as early workings of key elements of the poem is greatly heightened by work undertaken by a number of scholars on passages elsewhere in the notebook. For instance,

> Unloose me touch, you are taking the breath from my
> throat
> Unbar your gates – you are too much for me,[23]

is to be found in all early versions of one of the more agonised moments of the poem. Similarly, we can trace in,

> I held more than I thought

I did not think I was big enough for so much ecstasy
Or that a touch could take it all out of me,[24]

the origin of another climactic moment in the poem.

In the light of my attempt to establish that Whitman is firmly engaged in schooling his readership concerning thought and, in particular, on how to use thought in order to be happy, more than one passage in the notebook, each with its equivalent in the poem, offers a picture of schoolmaster - pupil bonding. The schooling is not of a formal nature but promises liberation, in an open-air future of constant instruction or self-instruction:

I will not be a great philosopher .....
But I will open the shutters and the sash and hook my left
arm around
Your waist till I point you to the road .....

But I will take each man and woman of you to the window and open the shutters and the sash and my left arm shall hook you round the waist, and my right shall point to the endless and beginingless road up along. [25]

But perhaps the section of the notebook which has received most attention is the following:

I am the poet of slaves and of the masters of slaves
I am the poet of the body
And I am the poet of the soul
I go with the slaves of the earth equally with the masters
And I will stand between the masters and the slaves
Entering into both so that both shall understand me alike
I am the poet of Strength and Hope.[26]

Betsy Erkkila, in particular, has interrogated the comments concerning slavery in order to suggest Whitman's political position, and Martin Klammer has gone so far as to base his study of Whitman and slavery on it. But my concern lies with the last

line and its affirmation of a poet offering succour; it furnishes another persuasive instance of the way in which individual seed beds of ideas and motifs found in the notebooks feed into the poem. Nor is it difficult to see that within the poem each theme interlocks with others: for example 'breath' is that of the poet as singer, is that of the caring persona filling the sufferers with hope, is that of the healthy body and soul which is both the aim of the poem, and the very body of the poem itself.

I do not wish to deny this complexity, glimpsed here in the notebook and fully worked up in the poem, but rather to suggest that located within one key section of the notebook is evidence of Whitman exploring how succour can be offered to the reader through a poem which seeks to make him or her 'happy' by schooling, by instruction in how to think positively about the self. I suggest this theme, duly takes a prominent place, alongside the other main themes in the poem.

But any good schoolmaster will have a lesson plan and will often share this with his pupils. These two important verse paragraphs which constitute section seventeen of the poem, are, I suggest, just one part of a structure, a strand of the poem which consists of Whitman sharing a lesson plan with his reader, as he delivers his radical lesson concerning happiness and the self. One other part of the plan has already been briefly discussed in reviewing the manner in which in the opening of the poem he celebrates his "self" and tells the pupils that they are to "assume" along with him. It has also been suggested that what unfolds will not deliver the lesson objective, ie happiness, immediately (that would be to follow the Fowler line). Whitman sticks to this element of his lesson plan, a delayed fulfilment, very well indeed, as is revealed by an examination of his use, and non- use of the terms "happy" and "happiness."

The actual word "happy" only appears for the first time in section fifteen in one of the items in one of Whitman's catalogues, "the one-year wife is recovering and happy, a week ago she bore her / first child."[27] It then resurfaces in sections twenty-five and twenty-seven. Both of these occurences can be seen as part of a shared lesson plan. In the case of the former, 'Happiness ....which whoever hears me let him or her set out in / search of this day,[28,29] Whitman is reminding the pupil that he hasn't been told all that there is to be told yet. In the case of the latter, 'I merely stir, press, feel with my fingers and am happy.'[30] this is the highpoint of the lesson in terms of being happy through physical contact with the physical world and with others. It is not, however, the end of the matter, or of the lesson, as mental connection is still to be finalised, but is a dramatic point of partial delivery.

It is a part of the listener's 'schooling' to assume what Whitman assumes and be exhilarated by what the persona shares with him. At times this shared exhilaration looks like the achievement of the intended goal of happiness, as in the run of positives in section twenty and the start of section twenty-one. Here, in close proximity, we have "I sit content... I sit content... I can cheerfully take it now...with equal cheerfulness... I laugh... the pleasures of heaven are with me."[31] The task of the lesson markers just discussed is to ensure that we keep that final goal in sight, and weigh the importance of the ecstatic contributions as contributory to happiness, not definitive.

The final careful use Whitman makes of direct reference to "happy" or "happiness" is later in the poem, in section fifty:

Do you see O my brothers and sisters?
It is not chaos or death ... it is form and union and plan... it
is eternal life...it is happiness.[32]

This is the teacher sharing that point in his lesson plan when he checks with his learners that they have 'got it.' The use of 'brothers and sisters' here is of interest, suggesting that the build up to this strategic declaration of 'lesson accomplished' in section fifty, has been a lengthy one, possibly stretching from the very moment when the persona first addressed these young people:

Come my children,
Come my boys and girls, and my women and household
and intimates,[33]

Within the sections leading from this clarion call through to the final declaration concerning happiness, it is possible to pick out features which indicate that, amongst the other issues he is addressing, Whitman is most certainly returning, ever more strongly, to the theme of instruction to the young people of his time, One of his lesson objectives is to convey to them the necessity of thinking well of themselves in order to be ready for happiness, and, another is to warn them to close their minds to false advice.

One significant feature of those moments when the speaker addresses his young audience is that he is careful to guide them away from other advice-givers. That is the import of the depiction of a follower who has matured by following the speaker and, in doing so, rebels against others' advice:

The boy I love, the same becomes a man not through derived
Power but in his own right,

Wicked, rather than virtuous out of conformity or fear.[34]

The contrast between a Whitman who loves the boy who is wickedly independent of parental control, and Fowler, who as editor of *The American Phrenological Journal* offered to love a young reader whom he might mould into a dutiful 'foster-son,' is a telling one. Perhaps the key term here is 'wicked,' as it does not carry any weight of absolute immorality – it is precisely weighted to suggest that the greatest sin is to be virtuous by reason of a desire to conform to others' view of one-self. Whitman abhors that any one gains strength through 'derived power.' I suggest the indication that this false 'power' is on offer within contemporary culture, that it is in the form of advice books and magazines and journals for the young, is given in the lines in the previous section, where the speaker implores his audience, even as he dazzles them:

Long enough have you dreamed contemptible dreams
Now I wash the gums from your eyes
You must habit yourself to the dazzle of the light and of
every moment of your life.

Long have you timidly waded, holding a plank by the shore,
Now I will you to be a bold swimmer,
To jump off in the midst of the sea, and rise again and nod to me
and shout, and laughingly dash with your hair.[35]

Whilst the sea swimming section has received much critical attention and has been hailed as yielding a trope which provides insight into the themes of the liberation of body and of soul, the import of the previous lines has been missed. The 'you' are the youths already discussed and the speaker bewails the possibility that they should be seduced by 'dreams,' the advice givers' offerings. These certainly include offerings which seek to control through fear, by depicting a way of thinking which devalues the self through an insistence on self-control and duty, and emphasises earthly sin, or

offers merely material success. The speaker places himself in opposition to such dreams, in offering to liberate his young 'athletes.'

What is to be made of the 'gum' as a trope, and the splendid line that follows? It is worth recalling the oppositional power of the line, "the efflux of the soul is happiness" from "Poem of The Road." In the world which Webster inhabited, and which his dictionary reflected, the only "Efflux" possible was that of a divine light emanating from God, flowing, sometimes in a fickle manner upon an often undeserving mankind. In so far as he was able to use words as weapons, Whitman chose to announce that the most liberating thought possible was to conceive of the soul of one and all as a source of happiness, and to assist his audience to approach this point of view. This line returns to similar concerns, ones addressed in the defiant stance taken in the opening lines of the poem. The message of this section of the poem is that rather than living a life in the shadows it is possible to live a full life, in 'the dazzle of the light.'[36] The seductive trope of a life of full potential as a series of fully irradiated moments is, literally, dazzling. Another trope in play here is that of seeing clearly, representing having clarity about yourself and your purpose. What is most interesting is the command to 'habit yourself,' and I suggest that this carries a range of meanings which combine to deliver a powerful promise. The primary one is the acknowledgement that to stop taking negative advice from others, even when Whitman has provided a more affirmative alternative, will not be easy. The implication, also, is that the reader will need to work at making this new way of seeing and thinking a habit – only through that discipline will he /she fully absorb its power and wear it as of right – a new way of seeing can be adopted as can new clothes.

In one sense the overview that happiness is at the core of 'things,' which is the triumphant declaration we have been examining near the end of the poem appears, to echo the Fowler assertions in phrenological texts. But this is not the case. Where Fowler glibly promised to reveal that happiness dominates the mind's organs, the Whitman persona at the climax of section fifty of the poem is exhausted, 'There is that in me... I do not know what it is ... but I know it is in me / wretched and sweaty ...'[37] ; he has shared with his pupils many insights, his own 'lesson plan,' how to love the world of nature, respect all social beings, and all varieties of sexuality. All of these insights have been acknowledged by critics and by those who search in Whitman's work for support for worthy causes. What has been overlooked is that this weary exhaustion is also the result of the effort on Whitman's part to *teach* that happiness in your relation to the world has to be premised on thinking for yourself and struggling against those who, by controlling and restricting your thoughts, threaten you. Emphasising this radical approach to happiness is an extremely arduous task. Whitman has carefully positioned his fullest critique of the advice-givers just prior to the climactic section fifty. Placed there, it allows him to expose their crippling vision, which, in his powerful trope, has "gummed up" the eyesight of the youth of his day, restricting their ability to think positively about themselves, denying them happiness. In his pursuit of a mental therapeutic he constantly keeps in his sights those whose guidance on how to think of oneself is restrictive, those who would seek to imprison both mind and body of Whitman's 'boys and girls.'

In previous chapters Whitman's critique of the advice provided to his contemporaries, and to young men in particular, by exponents of contemporary phrenology was outlined. It was suggested that he wished to model within his poetic a mental therapeutic which sought to release within the reader an awareness of energies and potential: a therapeutic which would avoid, or rather oppose, the insistence by phrenologists on balance, control and order. One of the most salient features of the materials which flowed from the Fowler and Wells publishing enterprise is the sheer repetition of format and content. This has a material and philosophical and ideological basis as all the advice and information and exhortation, whether it be in journal, or pamphlet, or book, rests on the foundation of the rigid schemata of the enumeration and definition of the organs of the mind - everything flows from this and returns to it in a carefully crafted but repetitious exhortation to the reader. This rigid conformity naturally permeates the central event in popular phrenology's presentation of itself as "science" and "therapy" to the public; the often infamous "reading" of a head. It is worthwhile to review again what was briefly discussed in a previous chapter, the nature of this interaction. A review will ensure a full understanding of the key processes involved in the "reading" offered to subscribers to the *American Phrenological Journal.* On offer in the journal was what was termed a Portrait, itself derived from a "reading," but presented visually and accompanied by detailed text and commentary. It will be argued that Whitman's 1855 frontispiece to *Leaves of Grass* gains resonance from critiquing this re-presentation of a "reading."

The central activity for the man or woman interested in, and wishing to engage with, phrenology was an offering up of themselves for their skull to be read. Central to this experience was the ability of the subject to take away with him or her, immediately on completion of the reading, a compact little book from the Fowler and Wells imprint entitled *Self Instructor in Phrenology and Physiology*. The intellectual, cultural and introspective reassurance this offered was considerable. The fact that the tight-packed pages outlining 'Physiological Conditions Relating to Character', 'Propensities,' and all the 'Organs of the Mind,' were repeats of identical material, serialised in the *Journal,* and brought together regularly in textbooks, offered reassurance. Moreover, to those desperate for such reassurance, it appeared as if all human knowledge about the mind, as revealed through study of the mental organs, and traceable in the skull, was in their hand, in the form of a permanent, personal possession. In addition, and sitting proudly at the very beginning of a reader's copy, was a chart of all the organs with the appropriate scores that, together, once tallied, constitute the " you" recorded by the phrenologist. In the copy in my possession the front page announces that this front section is the "Chart of the Character" of William Nelles, who was "read,"(the printed term is "AS GIVEN BY"), on Nov., 22, 1856. O S Fowler has entered by hand these details, 'WM. Nelles .... O S Fowler. Nov22 1856' above the last printed lines:

> BY O. S. AND L.N. FOWLER
>
> PRACTICAL PHRENOLOGISTS
>
> "Your head is the type of your mentality
>
> Self-knowledge is the essence of all knowledge"[38]

In the case of *The American Phrenological Journal* there is one regular, very patterned, feature of the Journal's staple content which proffers an equivalent to this "reading" of the individual cranium, being designed to offer what the "reading" of a head provides - knowledge of the individual's character and potential. The reading is devoted to all the organs, but is selective, and not once in the 40 year run of the journal is it of anyone other than a famous person. It is entitled a "Phrenological Portrait," consisting of a pictorial representation of the man or woman, followed by a selective reading of the organs with commentary, and followed, in turn, by a short biography.[39]

Sometimes, as Fowler's text claims, the phrenological reading on which the Portrait is based has been a live one, in which case the actual measurements are generally given. However, in many cases Fowler is happy to inform us that he has worked from a daguerreotype, or from an engraving or wood cut taken from a daguerreotype. It is this latter form of representation which will allow us to consider such practices in relation to the famous frontispiece to the 1855 first edition of *Leaves of Grass*, itself of a similar format.

First, however, it is necessary to place the daguerreotype within the social and economic culture of New York in the 1850s. A number of very important questions need to be asked of this well documented new form of photography:[40] namely, what gave this newly arrived process such prestige and cultural resonance that it could be considered to convey, simply and clearly, the truth, or truths, of an individual character; was this accolade entirely uncontested; what other outlets were there for daguerreotypes of the famous, and engravings from such, and were these used to

educate and guide contemporaries; and, finally, perhaps the most crucial question of all - what over-arching, psycho-social need pertained to the era of 1850 to 1865 that called forth, literally, millions of daguerreotypes?

The most detailed analysis of the cultural space occupied by the daguerreotype process is that of Rudisill. He summarises his observations at the end of his chapter "The Climate of Need" in the form of "four basic thoughts (which) must guide our examination of the medium in American society"[41]:

> First, we must recognise that the daguerreotype provided a new way for people to see themselves ... Second we must recall that when people dealt with daguerreotypes they were responding to direct images. Each daguerreotype was unique. .....Third, we must recognise that the greatest majority of the daguerreotypes produced were made deliberately. The relatively slow nature of the process usually meant that candid pictures were not possible. The pictures were deliberate in that they were produced by the conjunction of a knowing sitter and a purposeful cameraman..... Finally, these three ideas combine to suggest a fourth: the basic assumption that the main function of the daguerreotype was a symbolic one. Daguerreotypes were deliberately wrought images to which people responded at a level of personal feeling,[42]

In addition, in summarising his thoughts in his final chapter, "The Mirror of America," he concludes thus:

> When all the facets of the daguerreotype's use in America come together for a review we can summarise the medium's function in three primary ways - it served as a direct aid to cultural nationalism, it helped Americans adjust themselves intuitively to the transition from agrarian to a technological society, and it was ultimately a reflection of spiritual concerns motivating the nation.[43]

These observations begin to flesh out a cultural identikit for the process : provision of a unique record of self, one that can be constructed but is direct and innovatory,

and can carry spiritual and national symbolism. This is not dissimilar to both phrenology's agenda and Whitman's poetic and may provide an explanation, that of common purpose, for both parties' utilisation of a daguerreotype for illustrative purposes.

The question as to whether daguerreotypes of famous people were used outside the pages of *The American Phrenological Journal* is easily answered. Many voices attest to such a phenomenon. Referring to Matthew Brady's "Gallery of Illustrious Americans," Pfister claims images like these were operating as "democratic propaganda documents", ones "bringing the great into homes."[44] Henry Root, who made many astute observations concerning early photography, attests to the potential capacity of the daguerreotype image to instruct and elevate the common viewer by way of his patronising dismissal of those who might dare to be unaffected; "And he who beholding on every side within his dwelling, spectacles of the class above named, derives from them no elevating moral influences, must be made of almost hopelessly impenetrable stuff."[45]

Alan Trachtenberg, in his incisive analysis of early American photography, turns to further comments by Root. Using Root's distinction between memorial pictures of "our near and dear" and likenesses of "the great and good," he carefully positions the practices and conventions associated with the latter as helping the daguerreotype occupy a role which fully conformed to what Root saw as contemporary photography's mission. As Trachtenberg puts it:

> By 1850 the profession of photography had refined a theory and claimed a mission consonant with other pedagogical institutions of "character" in

> respectable society. The acceptance of a moral purpose and mission helped define an institutional place for photography within the realm of art... .[46]

Despite all its claims to being a radical, alternative way of understanding the world, it is the conservative role, acknowledged here, one of "a moral purpose and mission," that will be revealed in phrenology's use of the opportunities afforded by the emergence of the daguerreotype.

In relation to the question of the moral impact of photographic images, Trachtenberg, citing Root once more, is emphatic:

> He put most directly and vividly the moral terms of photography's moral mission. He argued that "in this competitive and selfish world of ours the photographic portrait has a distinct and significant role to play. Keeping close in view 'these literal transcriptions of features and forms, once dear to us, provides a 'benediction' by the strengthening of 'the social feelings." Memorial images assured harmony at home. Public portraits inculcated the civic virtues required by the Republic.[47]

Trachtenberg then cites an observation from Root's *Camera and Pencil,* which eulogises the beneficial effect on the viewer of exposure to images of the great:

> But not alone our near and dear are thus kept with us; the great and the good, the heroes, saints, and sages of all lands and all eras are, by these lifelike 'presentments,' brought within the constant purview of the young, the middle-aged, and the old. The pure, the high, the noble traits beaming from these faces and forms, - who shall measure the greatness of their effect on the impressionable minds of those who catch sight of them at every turn?[48]

There were, therefore, a number of voices equally confident of the unalloyed, simple and direct moral 'benediction' available through exposure to the daguerreotype. Of interest to this study is the stance taken on this issue by Fowler. Unsurprisingly, his voice was eulogistic and strident as he ensured that he passed comment regularly on this matter in *The American Phrenological Journal.* Assuring his subscribers that a

key aim of his is to "mould the now-forming character of the republic,"[49] he insists that he will do so by "laying siege to the rising race of young men", and when he reaches his rhetorical high point in the article, he places the Phrenological Portrait at the centre of this moral and civic enterprise:

> Our analysis of the characters of prominent men, of which Bryant form a sample, will present the PRACTICAL application of Phrenology in as utilitarian a light as it can well be presented, and teach amateurs just what they require to know.[Emphasis in Original].

As is common, Fowler's tone of ecstatic promise barely conceals an authoritarian stance taken toward the young men who will be in receipt of this glimpse of exemplary character, those whose defences he claims, in a very revealing phrase, he will "lay siege to." When Fowler is operating in this vein, the phrase 'just what" carries more of a suggestion of the repressive 'only those required,' than it does of the equally feasible, more liberating, 'precisely any that are needed.' When he closes his outpouring with the ringing claim that the journal aims to "Promulgate soul-purifying and expanding truths, which shall make its readers better and happier," we should note the use of that key term 'promulgate.' As was outlined earlier it is a term of interest to Whitman and is important in our understanding of the construction of his poetic. Here it neatly encapsulates what Fowler is claiming for the daguerreotype at the centre of his Portraits of the great - it will simply flesh forth and enact the transparent laws of phrenology. Picking up a revealing term in his description above, 'utilitarian,' it is useful to think of Fowler's mission as one of utilitarian promulgation.

It is important to firmly establish that this high-minded and moralistic view of the practical use of photography was a choice made by phrenologists in the context of the existence of a range of views at the time, including many which saw the matter of usage as more complex, intriguing and potentially multiple. That Whitman was aware of these wider considerations as well as in rebellion against phrenology's more restricted view is important. Allan Trachtenberg has skillfully mapped in some detail contemporary views of the complex potentiality of the new medium. Such a survey is important in answering the last of the key questions posed earlier – why were the abilities to pre-eminently capture objective reality, and to unproblematically delineate character, so often claimed to be facets of photography in Whitman's time?

As part of the ongoing debate as to whether photography could be considered an art, it was examined for its ability to convey inner spiritual truth and often found lacking. In contrast to art, it was often suggested that photography was only a conveyer of the detailed surface. Both the motivation and the practices of the two parties to the photographic act came under scrutiny and photographers were seen to be complicit in a coding process which glamourised and sought to improve on what was, often, very imperfect. The sitter, equally, was seen as offering one frozen moment, one partial representation of the self, as "the truth." Also present in contemporary discussion was the fear that the camera's cold eye might catch sight of those parts of the self which the sitter might prefer to keep concealed.

Relevant to all these issues is the catalogue of a 1978 exhibition in the Smithsonian Institute which forms the text of *Facing the Light.* The range of material gathered for the exhibition is instructive as to the variety of poses and codings which came in

to play when the great and the good offered to sit for a daguerreotype. A brief summary captures the sheer range.

There is Thomas Cole, who Pfister duly notes as a great man, who, "possessing the artist or actor's professional skills had an obvious advantage in projecting a sense of character." [50] There are politicians engaging with the process in a number of ways, some of which fuel the concerns of those who fear being 'duped': Daniel Webster projects [to use this loaded term], his own deliberate sense of a giant of the Senate; J Calhoun tacitly, [or is it defiantly?], accepts the image of firebrand as he adopts his demonic pose; William Seward and Millard Fillimore present a tightly controlled surface demeanour beneath which the spectator can't reach, as does Martin Van Buren. Sometimes the apparent effort to conform to a role is so strained that it may indeed be counter-productive and suggest a complicity on the part of both parties to succeed at all costs - this is the case with Eliku Burrit as he strains to conform to the pose of an aspirational intellectual. Finally the presence of pairs of images displays the sitters' concern to manipulate and change representations of themselves. A case in point is that of W. L. Garrison. Both of Garrison's images involve expedient political representation: in the case of the earlier image the intent is to counteract, through the daguerreotype's portrayal of restraint and composure, claims that the great man was wild: in the case of the later, taken once he was free from such criticism, and able to insist on the 'fervid, reforming', inner man being in control, it is to promote that fervid zeal. What this dazzling exhibition puts on display is the range of representational strategies which framed the meeting of the great and the good and the daguerreotype artists of the early years of photography.

Despite the deep anxieties that were expressed concerning the potency of the photographic process, often including accusations against those great men involved in the production of the range of images in *Facing the Light*, there were certain key claims made for the daguerreotype which retained currency: the full, accurate, re-production of "reality"; the full capturing of all available detail, magically seized in a frozen moment in time, and placed in a unique receptical - apparently without human intervention. To understand the role that the daguerreotype played in Fowler's Portraits in *The American Phrenological Journal* it is important to focus on the limited and simplistic view he took of its power, based on just such a seductive belief concerning the daguerreotype process, one which obviously ignored the complex and often debatable usages in play in his culture.

Trachtenberg has described a rationale common to daguerreotype artists of the time who, "held that the true daguerreotype artist looked through surfaces to depths, treated the exterior surface of persons as signs or expressions of inner truths, of interior reality."[51] This could just as easily be a description of the rationale of phrenology, with its claim to be able to reveal, through cranial examination, the inner truths of the individual. In discussing mainstream culture of the 1840's having an "obsession" with achieving, showing and preserving "character" Trachtenberg, using insights from the work of Karen Halttunen,[52] places certain photographers squarely in the frame for assuaging such psycho-social anxieties:

> Drawing on a rhetoric of sentiment, portrait photography developed a system of references to meet this 'ante-bellum crisis of confidence' and provided as important and widespread an agency for overcoming such anxieties as popular manuals on character, conduct , and success ..... Some writers on photography articulated a system based on the popular fads of phrenology and physiology..... photographers adopted the notion that the exterior of a person might reveal inner character, and conventionalised it in a sentimentalised repertoire of expressive poses.[53]

The actual limitation of the resultant product is suggested in the comment which Trachtenberg adds, "in fact the conventional poses addressed social more than moral categories, identifying character with role," and in the examples he cites, "lawyers for example, should stand in such a way before the lens, orators and preachers in another, *poets should be seated at their desk*, and so on."[emphasis in original][54] Trachtenberg's analysis of the radically subversive images of Whitman elsewhere in his study suggest he is aware of possibilities of rebellion against such crippling representational rules. Indeed, he then confirms the view that Whitman presented the world with a magnificent example of just such a rebellious use of the daguerreotype in his celebrated frontispiece of 1855. I am in agreement, but wish to factor in Fowlers' portraits as a 'target.'

Now that we have explored, in some detail, the alluring but simplistic appeal of the daguerreotype and acknowledged the presence in mid nineteenth century America of other, more complex conceptions of its use, we are in a better position to assess fully the role played by the engravings taken from daguerreotype originals that form the illustration within Fowler's Portraits. Through their narrower view of the daguerreotype process, they bolster the credibility of the enterprise the reader is embarked on, following the laws of the mind revealed within each individual: there, before the readers' eyes is the re-representation of a photographic system which could, in this narrower conception, itself, claim to capture the essence of the individual, coldly, accurately and fully.

It should not be underestimated how socially reassuring such 'capture' was, both for the subject and for Fowler's readers. It was not only the individual in 1855, who had undertaken to have his head read, who received textual reassurance in the form of the book he purchased. It is instructive to consider what was on offer to the reader of the *Journal* who digested the Portraits. There was an available diet, generally, of two or three, in each monthly issue.

He or she received a second hand reading of a famous person's head. There was no guarantee that the author of the portrait had actually read the head. As mentioned previously, as often as not, the author had simply read the head from the engraving of a daguerreotype and that engraving was on view within the text, thus placing the reader in the same viewing position as the author (a subtle and seductive elevation of the reader). Since the daguerreotype captured the essence of a famous person, it assisted the main enterprise of the phrenological reading, to map the mental characteristics of the individual for instruction.

I wish to suggest that the word "read" here, if carefully considered, can allow us to reconstruct a likely Whitman reaction to the pedagogic enterprise that constitutes the Phrenological Portrait within the *Journal.* In addition, I will tentatively suggest that evidence of Whitman's oppositional stance, so important to him in forging a new, intimate relation to his reader, lies in the nature of his famous 1855 frontispiece. Indeed, to fully appreciate his stance the frontispiece needs to be considered as standing diametrically opposed in representational and pedagogic terms to the portraits.

"Read" can be used to describe the act of tallying and interpreting the size of the mental organs in the phrenological process in order to understand the potentialities of the subject. It obviously can also refer to the act of deciphering text and extracting meaning from such an engagement. Research is at one in suggesting that Whitman wished us to read his poems in order to extract a new conception of what it was to be an American, and how to fulfill our potential. A key component in this new readership contract, it is suggested, was the offering of a complex and challenging representation of himself for us to engage with, or to 'read.'

It was a frequent tactic on Whitman's part to warn a new reader that in engaging with the persona of the poems he/she would not be involved in a straightforward process. Two challenges from "Song of Myself" make this point:

> Not words of routine this song of mine
> But abruptly to question, to leap beyond yet nearer bring...
> ...My words itch at your ears till you understand them,
> I do not say these things for a dollar or to fill up the time while I
> wait for a boat,
> It is you talking just as much as myself, I act as the tongue of you,
> Tied in your mouth in me it begins to be loosened[55]

And there is the following final broadside in "Whoever You Are Now Holding Me In Hand," continuing this theme:

> But these leave conning you con at peril,
> For these leaves and me you will not understand,
> They will elude you at first and still more afterward, I will
> certainly elude you[56]

Such moments in the poems have been read as indicative of the poet offering tantalising opportunities to the reader, which necessitate a radical break from

convention in the realms of sexuality, in terms of rhetoric and language, and in terms of spiritual fulfillment. I wish to suggest that, in addition, a new 'reading' process of "reading" the persona placed before the reader, involving therapeutic assistance concerning the mind, is made available in the major poems of 1855 and 1856 and that the construction of such an offering relies, in part, on a careful, radical, reformulation of Fowler's phrenological instruction, particularly as it is exemplified in the phrenological portrait.

Analysis, earlier in this study, of key poems in 1855 and 1856 established the importance of their formal structure, involving, as was shown, a display, by a persona of the benefits of channeling mental power, followed by careful and considerate instruction of the reader. It is suggested that Whitman views the portrait which forms the frontispiece of *Leaves of Grass* as an opportunity for the reader to receive instruction of a similar nature. The invitation is to view the image of a person who is neither famous nor striking a conventional pose as a positive therapeutic experience. It is suggested that such radical instruction is at one with the therapeutic purposes of the poems that follow in 1855 and benefits significantly from an implicit critique of the instructional processes that inform the portraits in *The American Phrenological Journal.*

To understand the Portraits fully, as a contemporary reader might, it is necessary to examine the section where the writer dissects the head in question, referring to what can be "read" from the head, seen in line engraving copy of a daguerreotype. Taken from the same year as Whitman's own self-portrait of 1855, the Phrenological Portrait of Spencer Houghton Cone is typical [Appendix 2]

As the text shows, there are negative qualities identified in the reading, but they are organised so as to support a superlative: eg Cone didn't get enough nourishment, mentally, but despite this, or, due to this, he has an admirable passion for work. A reading of Moderate selfishness and Executiveness might seem negative, but, in this instance, they are merely seen as combining with motive temperament to give unusual energy. The consideration of Cone's indications of prudence hovers for a moment on the edge of criticism, only to quickly resolve into a restrained positive comment. Simple virtues are telegraphed and combined into dynamic positive chains of attributes. Benevolence added to Veneration generates a "controlling" Sympathy. Linked attributes combine to prefigure and "explain" his successful and various careers, first as actor, and then, Baptist minister. In tune with this career path, therefore, strong Comparison, along with strong Casuality, guarantees the good conversation of an excellent communicator. In similar vein he is noted as being able to adapt well to people and to use gestures effectively. Examination of Cohn's actual biography shows how the chronologically arranged positives in his Phrenological Portrait correspond exactly to just those qualities, at each stage of his life, which fit his career path. The exact fit, therefore, warrants rapturous acclaim from editor and reader.

Phrenology's general claim to offer a roadmap for improvement was indeed carried through in the case of individual heads being read: advice was given to work on developing a particular organ, or on lessening another (and both in the Journal and the reformist books, Fowler and Wells did identify deficiencies linked to identifiable mental organs). When, however, the great and the good are presented in the portrait,

the case is markedly different. The reading is done in a manner which ignores deficiencies. Effectively there is no attempt to map or read the person on display in such a way as to make a link to a reader eager for a working model to aid his or her own self-improvement. Instead the life of he or she on display is being read backwards to explain how greatness has been achieved and as the viewer reads the carefully poised and eulogistic chronological, " phrenological character." In addition, he or she is also receiving reassurance of the clinical accuracy of the Portrait from the presence of the visual image, in the form of a woodcut derived from that most objective and unproblematic medium - the daguerreotype.

In the opening sections of "Song of Myself" Whitman sets up a number of challenges to the reader, daring us to remain in a variety of conventional modes, whilst also hinting at possible liberation from such stasis. One of the most challenging clarion calls comes in the following passage:

> Stop this day and night with me.....
> You shall no longer take things at second hand or third hand nor look
> through the eyes of
> the dead nor feed on the spectres in books,[57]

Here Whitman is representing the conventional reading of his contemporaries as an act associated with sterility and death on more than one level. "The eyes of the dead" contains two critiques. Reading texts produced by authors now dead is dismissed as sterile, but, in addition, Whitman, with an eye on his lifelike and contemporary frontispiece (and of course reminding us of it), hints that contemporary authors can be "dead" if they do not meet his demands for a new American bard bustling with energy. Taking things at second or third hand is also

savaged by Whitman. An angle he may be exploring is the primacy of first hand experience, as he sees it, so that the mere recounting of narratives of "others" lacks vitality. Perhaps the most incisive criticism lies in the representation of the reading experience as being equivalent to a ghoulish feast, revealed when mention is made of how contemporaries feed on a diet based on 'spectres.'

What is the range of meaning of this term that Whitman is calling into play by using this term? He may wish to suggest a body which lacks substantiality, being only an outline of a person and as such incapable of being pinned down by the reader. Equally he may be emphasising that feeding on the dead, on that which is not natural, is, perversely, unsatisfying. Although he may be alluding to contemporary taste for gothic adventure I suggest the main thrust lies in critiquing the literature of his own day for not providing a contemporary representation of a body (non-spectral), to nourish readers through an engagement which can be categorised as "first-hand."

Of course Whitman is also re-presenting to us the complex and tantalising frontispiece as an alternative to such a negative and sterile "reading." Notable Whitman scholars such as Ed Folsom and Alan Trachtenberg[58] have given us a reading of this image which stresses its attempt, within representational restrictions, to pop up from the page, to exude hints of sexual and political energy, to suggest and flaunt a contemporary, working-class poise, all designed to challenge the viewer by being vital and "alive." We have no evidence through reviews or within the poetry of what Whitman thought of the nourishment provided by the reading experience offered by the American Phrenological Portraits as contained in Fowler's Journal. I

suggest, however, that it is possible to consider that the experience of being a reader of the portraits is one of the targets Whitman had in view when, through this striking trope, he alerted his readers to the dangers of taking in dead nourishment through reading.

In the case of "reading" a phrenological portrait the reader is indeed looking on a 'spectre', a cold reduction of the great man or woman to a series of tallied evaluations of mental capacity which explain or sum up a eulogised life. The experience through language and visual representation on the page truly deserves to be described as second or third hand. The great person is reduced to a system of mechanical mental laws which is "experienced" at two removes: by a daguerreotype which supposedly captured the full essence of the head and character, which is further reduced to a wood engraving with which the reader engages, or rather by which (s)he, is instructed. The biography, as examined earlier, merely announces that success has been achieved. There is, indeed, thin nourishment in all of this.

Critical historians of the ante-bellum period have reminded us that the nourishment Whitman severely criticizes, found, arguably, in these phrenological portraits, was on offer to contemporaries in other formats. Alan Trachtenberg has examined in detail the cultural importance of that large part of Matthew Brady's output which dealt with famous people, most famously in *The Gallery of Illustrious Americans*.[59] The enterprise is described thus by Trachtenberg:

> Brady's aim was not merely to document a face and body but to transform the figure into a cultural message; here is the *look* of the lofty, the famed, and the mighty. In that look also lies a promise of transformation for everyone.[60]

Implicit here is the notion that all one has to do is regard the image in order to be transformed, such is the force of the photographic image. Ed Folsom, amongst others, has explored in detail the fascination of potential transformation that the early photograph held for Whitman. However, it is another key article by Alan Trachtenberg, in which a comprehensive analysis of the cultural significance of the daguerreotype is undertaken, focusing on a trope, the daguerreotype as "mirror in the marketplace," that provides additional insights relevant to Whitman's critique of transformative powers claimed for daguerreotypes. Drawing on observations made by Lewis Gaylord Clark, editor of *The Knickerbocker*, Trachtenberg teases out a series of elements within the trope to flesh out the full complexity of the cultural resonance of the daguerreotype. Many of these elements have been noted already in this chapter, but two deserve particular attention and assist in helping to understand Whitman's use of a portrait in his frontispiece and his determined opposition to the uses made of portraits in *The American Phrenological Journal.*

The first concerns 'a cultural program for photography already established in public discourse by 1846':

> The photograph represents a different kind of image from that which catches the eye in the crowded flux of the street, and in its difference lies a hope for control, for a moral pedagogy from above: a teaching by images of the virtues missing on city streets and in shops and halls of public office.[61]

The descriptions of the daguerreotype providing 'hope for control,' 'a moral pedagogy' and teaching virtues is entirely consistent with the purposes of the portrait as it featured in *The American Phrenological Journal.* Whitman's own portrait is designed to work in opposition to such prescriptions and to counter what

Trachtenberg describes later as a corollary role for the daguerreotype, 'an emblem of security, a paragon of character.'[62]

Trachtenberg expands on comments in *The Christian Watchman* which speak of daguerreotypes as 'indices of human character,' providing 'so many exponential signs of disposition, desire, character,' and thus accomplishing 'a great revolution in the morals'[63] of portraiture. His expansion describes a scene in which can be placed both the daguerreotypes utilized by Fowler within his series of phrenological portraits, and Whitman's transformation of such in his own 1855 portrait:

> Unlike a hand-drawn or painted portrait, most likely designed to flatter, the daguerreotype offers a genuine mediation of a living presence, thus making it possible for the moral leadership of society to make itself felt as immediate experience. In a world where money transactions prevail, where the market place and competitive individualism encourage a traffic in false images, the emerging discourse implied, the daguerreotype portrait offers an especially potent corrective. For it too belongs to the market; it competes as image against image, as true image driving out false. The quasi-magical mirror of the daguerreotype miniature seemed to offer, then, an amulet against the menace hidden within the Broadway spectacle, the threat of counterfeit transactions at the center of the Empire City.[64]

The placement is however a complex one. Clearly what Trachtenberg outlines for the pedagogic, moral, daguerreotype is a position of privilege, of articulation of a moralistic truth in contrast to 'false' commercial portraiture images, which champion individualism. It is the contention of this study that Whitman's 1855 frontispiece positions itself in relation to the phrenological portraits of *The American Phronological Journal* in a manner which defiantly claims for itself the very 'immediate experience' and 'mediation of a living presence' discussed by Trachtenberg. It is also suggested that this claim is premised on a critique of Fowler's phrenological portraits, exposing them as offering, not an 'amulet' against

the menace of the marketplace, but a model of self-control, a passive absorption of the supposed virtues of the great and good.

Recent scholarship is unpacking the full implications of the frontispiece of 1855 by demonstrating the calculated construction of a composite daguerreotype from which the final image is derived. In essence Whitman put together separate elements from individual daguerreotypes to symbolise political free-thought (a hat), clarity of thought (a face), and awakened sensuality, (a re-touched crotch).[65] It is of some significance that Whitman should take such a utilitarian view as to how to use the daguerreotype process, thus placing himself in opposition to those who accepted and exploited an alternative view where, through the daguerreotype process, reality was simply captured, copied and codified into moral instruction. For the purposes of this study, it also shows a Whitman fully engaged in practising what his therapeutic humanitarian discourse demanded of the viewer and reader, that he/she put together a new self out of the re-appraisal of their current self, warts and all.

Useful as the discourse, including imagery, of phrenology was to Whitman, we can, nevertheless, see in his 1855 frontispiece a radical re-working of one of Fowler's key textual formats, the Portrait, to anticipate one of the key themes of "Song of Myself." In his frontispiece Whitman reformulates the rules so that he, an "ordinary" person, is available to be "read" in order that the reader of his accompanying text is led toward a challenging and potentially therapeutic reading experience, one eschewing the sterility of phrenology's offering of a spectral famous person.

[1] Zweig, p.254.
[2] Ibid., p.256.
[3] Examples include: Michael Moon, *Disseminating Whitman: Revision and Corporeality in "Leaves of Grass,"* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1991); Tenney Nathanson, *Whitman's Presence: Body, Voice and Writing in "Leaves of Grass"* (New York: New York University Press, 1992) and, most recently, Mark Maslan, *Whitman Possessed: Poetry, Sexuality, and Popular Authority* (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001).
[4]See Madeleine Sterne, *The Phrenological Fowlers.*
[5] Wrobel, *Pseudo-Science,* p.123.
[6] O.S. Fowler and L.N Fowler, *The Illustrated Self-Instructor* (Fowler and Wells Publishers: New York,1856), Frontispiece.
[7] Ibid., p.9.
[8] John D. Davies, *Phrenology Fad and Science ; An American Crusade* (New Haven: Yale University Pres , 1955), Biographical note p.183.
[9] *American Phrenological Journal* Vol. VI No.3 March 1844 p.49.
[10] Ibid. p. 51.
[11] Fowler's own footnote to page 51 shows him grappling with an attempt to champion both the tenets of constitutional depravity and his phrenological optimism – he does so by suggesting original sin is only "The primitive constitution" of man.
[12] I have retained the capitalisation reproduced in Malcolm Cowley's Penguin facsimile reprint of the nd Blodgett ,revert to lower case, citing the presence of the capitalisation in each of the first lines of the poems in 1855 as merely a convention used to open poems. In the light of Whitman's proven use of capitalisation for effect in a similar manner to Fowler, I consider it possible that there may be a second dimension to the use of capitals here, that of sustaining a provocative, thought-provoking, link to Fowler's usage.
[13] Variorum Vol. I p.1 ll. 1-3.
[14] Christian Technologies, Webster 1828: entry "Happiness"
[15] A number of critics have argued persuasively for the importance of the ambiguity here, most recently, Jay Grossman in *Reconstituting the American Renaissance* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2003), p.142. His conclusion is atypical as he identifies two modalities of the verb which he ascribes to two contradictory stances taken by the persona /poet to the reader – one which is participative and dynamic and one which has autocratic tendencies. I differ from these approaches in construing a single position being taken which contains encouragement to combat what could loosely be called the forces of non-happiness.
[16] Variorum Vol. I, p. 83. l. 1341.
[17] Miller, *Mosaic,* p.82.
[18] Variorum, I. p. 22 . 360n.
[19] Ibid., I. p. 22 ll.355-358; 356 n.
[20] Grier, Vol I. pp. 53-82.
[21] Ibid., pp. 79-80.
[22] Ibid., p.80.
[23] Ibid., p.76.
[24] Ibid., p.77.
[25] Ibid., pp. 66, 63. It is of interest that the next entry in the notebook after this abruptly finished entry is the deeply enigmatic "the sidewalks of eternity they are the freckles of Jupiter," followed immediately by "The being I want to see you become" I do not feel able to decode the former, but I am certain the latter could be viewed as the important goal which the poet is pointing to down the road, and relevant to this discussion about the notebook as a source for key moments in "Song of Myself."
[26] Ibid., p.67.
[27] Variorum I. p 17 l. 294.
[28] Ibid., I. p. 36. l. 575.
[29] The variorum reveals that in the 1871 edition Whitman resorted to "HAPPINESS.' It is possible he is falling back on the font of phrenological emphasis. However the matter is a complex on; see my

later comments on l. 1318 where 1860 had one level of capitalisation and 1871 another for "happiness."
[30] Variorum I. p. 38 l. 617.'
[31] Ibid., I. p.26. l. 413-423.
[32] Ibid., I p. 81 ll. 1317-1318.
[33] Ibid., p. 65. l. 1056-1057.
[34] Ibid., I p.77. ll. 1237-1238.
[35] Ibid.,, I. p. 76. ll. 1228-1233.
[36] Ibid., l. l. 1230.
[37] Ibid., I. p.81 1 .1309.
[38] O. S. Fowler & L. N. Fowler, *The Illustrated Self-Instructor in Phrenology and Physiology* (Fowler and Wells: New York, 1856), Frontispiece.
[39] These have been usefully gathered together by Madeleine Sterne, *A Phrenological Dictionary of Nineteenth- Century Americans* (Westport, Conneticut: Greenwood Press, 1982). She identifies the value of her selection as allowing us a glimpse of the famous of those times .as represented through a new emerging medium. The emphasis in the present study lies elsewhere, in examining the portraits as elements of a therapeutic and instructional discourse, a deeply ideological one, in Whitman's contemporary culture.
[40] The major studies I have drawn on are Ricard Rudisill, *Mirror Image: The Influence of The Daguerreotype on American Society* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1971); John Wood ed. *America and the Daguerreotype* (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1991); Alan Trachtenberg, *Reading American Photographs: Images as History, Matthew Brady to Walker Evans* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1989); Michael L. Carlebach, *The Origins of Photojournalism in America* (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1992); Harold Francis Pfister, *Facing the Light* (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1978).
[41] Rudisill, *Mirror Image*, p.31.
[42] Ibid., p.32.
[43] Ibid., p.227.
[44] Pfister, *Facing the Light,* p.22.
[45] Rudisill, p.184
[46] Trachtenberg, *Reading American Photographs*, p.30.
[47] Ibid., p.32.
[48] Ibid., The citation is from Marcus Aurelius Root, *The Camera and the Pencil or The Heliographic Art* (Philadelphia,Pa., 1864).
[49] American Phrenological Journal, 1849, Vol. 11. pp. 12-13.
[50] Pfister, *Facing the Light*, p.43.
[51] Trachtenberg, *Reading* p.27
[52] Karen Halttunen, Confidence Men and Painted Women: A Study of Middle Class Culture in *America* (New Haven: Yale University Press,1982).
[53] Trachtenberg, *Reading,* pp. 27-28.
[54] Ibid. Both.
[55] Variorum, I. p. 68. ll. 1086-1087; p.77. ll. 1246-1249.
[56] Blodgett, p 116. ll. 27-29.
[57] Variorum, I pp. 2-3. ll. 33-35.
[58] Analysis is to be found in Alan Trachtenberg, *Reading American Photographs*; Graham Clarke, *Walt Whitman The Poem as Private History* (London: Vision Press, 1991) and Ed Folsom, *Walt Whitman's Native Representations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994).
[59] Alan Trachtenberg, " Brady's Portraits", *Yale Review* 73 (Winter 1984) pp. 230-253.
[60] Ibid., p.250.
[61] Allan Trachtenberg, *Lincoln's Smile and Other Enigmas* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2007), p.11.
[62] Ibid., p.12.
[63] Ibid., p.11.
[64] Ibid., pp. 11-12.
[65] Ted Genoways first gave details of the composite nature of the image in a conference paper delivered at 'Leaves of Grass The 150th Anniversary Conference', University of Lincoln Nebraska, March/April 2005. It is fully documented in, '"One goodshaped and wellhung man': Accentuated Sexuality and the Uncertain Authorship of the Frontispiece to the 1855 Edition of *Leaves of Grass*", in Susan Belasco, Ed Folsom, and Kenneth M. Price, eds., *Leaves of Grass: The Sesquicentennial*

Essays (Lincoln: University of Nebraska, forthcoming). The 'bulging crotch' issue is discussed in Ed Folsom, "The Census of the 1855 *Leaves of Grass*: A Preliminary Report," *WWQR*, 24. 2/3 p. 81. and in Ed Folsom, *Walt Whitman: Whitman Making Books Books Making Whitman: A Catalogue & Commentary* (Iowa City: The University of Iowa, 2005), pp. 11-12.

CHAPTER FIVE

The Importance of "Blabbing" and A template for the "Politics of the Mind."

This chapter focuses on two short poems, "Poem of You, Whoever You Are," from 1856, and an uncollected manuscript fragment, "Who Wills with His Own Brain, " to demonstrate Whitman's acute awareness of the need to speak out directly, forcibly and succinctly, to "blab," about the mental "shackles" worn by his readership and to propose a blueprint or template for a way of thinking which would promote self autonomy and mental health. Whereas longer poems in 1855 and 1856 have been shown to contain considerable coverage of these issues, interwoven at times with other major themes, in the case of these two texts Whitman speaks in a more revealing and emphatic mode. In the first section it is argued that "Poem of You, Whoever You Are" is not a example of "optimistic religiosity[1]" but rather a withering attack on the cultural space that phrenology and other prescriptive advice-givers occupy. Cooter, Dalton, and others' research on phrenology as a symbolic resource system is utilised, not uncritically, to demonstrate the accuracy of Whitman's awareness of the attraction and deficiencies of advice-givers of his time. In the second section the fragment "Who Wills with His Own Brain" is scrutinised. It is suggested that the poem contains a critique of those, phrenologists included, who Whitman considered gave advice which restricted the autonomy of their readership. Building on this viewpoint. it is claimed Whitman articulates a strong challenge to his readers, conveyed, moreover, with subtlety and finesse, to engage in mental therapeutics to combat those who would

"shackle" them; in effect the fragment outlines a succinct model or template for a therapeutic to maintain self-esteem

Early in the poem "Poem of You, Whoever You Are" Whitman chastises himself for not speaking, hitherto, as directly, or as encouragingly, to his reader as is necessary:

> Oh I have been dilatory and dumb.
> I should have made my way straight to you long ago.
> I should have *blabbed* nothing but you, I should have chanted nothing but you.[2]

He then triumphantly announces his intention to be totally dedicated, in what is his new mission, that of chanting to 'make the hymns of you.[3]' From his description of the typical reader who is coming to the poem as someone who 'has slumbered upon yourself all your life,[4]' it is apparent that Whitman feels that his assistance is urgently needed. It is obvious that Whitman feels he is providing succour, or rather announcing his intention to do so, in the case of a recipient who is severely damaged in terms of self-esteem.

M Wynn Thomas has begun[5] to explore the critical situation Whitman's contemporaries found themselves in with respect to their attempt to maintain self-esteem. He argues that along with other poems in 1855/56 it is possible to see in "Poem to You, Whoever You Are" a situation where nature, as revealed in the vastness of America and as easily understood by nineteenth century Science, represents 'a serious threat to the self-confidence which is necessary to the human individual,' a threat which results in the poet insisting on treating the reader as

someone, 'who is urged to discover within himself, in reply, resources more than equal to the elementary forces by which he is threatened':

> Whoever you are, you are to hold your own at any hazard,
> These shows of the east and west are tame compared to you,
> These immense meadows, these interminable rivers – you are immense and interminable as they,
> These furies, elements, storms, motions of nature, throes of apparent dissolution – you are he or she who is master or mistress over them.[6]

Thomas is careful not to extend his analysis beyond the 1850's to a more wide-ranging approach offering a Whitman helping the reader meet a more existential and spiritual challenge. Instead he places emphasis on the social and political context in which Whitman is making his challenges and offers of help to his contemporaries. He describes the critical task he is embarking on, that of socially contextualising the crisis in self esteem on the part of his readers that Whitman confronts and assuages thus:

> But in the present context it is not the spiritually vexed question mankind's relationship to nature that is of immediate interest, but the social context of this relation. In the "Poem of You, Whoever You Are" the helplessness Whitman's contemporaries are prone to feel when faced by the might of natural processes is seen as simply one, albeit extreme, example of their general inability to believe that through their own attitudes and actions they can, to any significant degree, determine their own destinies. The inference is that their existential anxiety is partly a social symptom, and the work of recent historians has already enabled us to follow the aetiology of the underlying disease. Having been deprived by recent economic and political developments of effective control even over their limited personal affairs, the victims of change were left in a disorientated state which coloured their whole outlook.[7]

I wish to examine Whitman's self-styled "blabbing" in "Poem of You, Whoever You Are" as not just a study in this kind of anxiety, but also as an offer to the reader

to help him or her raise their self-esteem. The poem can be considered to be offering mental therapeutic assistance to the troubled reader in a manner similar to key poems previously analysed; the disorientated state being addressed is not inevitable and some measure of reclaimed control is possible through use of the powers of the mind. The longer poems of the second edition of *Leaves of Grass* weaved this reclamation in as one of a series of interlocking issues, but here in "Poem of You, Whoever You Are," it occupies centre stage as Whitman strives to perform the vital act of reawaking those who he "fear(s)... are walking the walks of dreams."[8]

It is important to recognise that a great many of Whitman's contemporaries were very eager to offer advice to the anxious of the time. A previous chapter explored the manner in which Whitman both borrowed from and struck an oppositional stance to the exhortations to young men offered within *The American Phrenological Journal.* A start was also made in the vital task of measuring Whitman's relation to other advice givers, such as Weaver. The next chapter will cast wider again in including in its discussion the important figure of Henry Ward Beecher.

Thomas unpicks the final section of "A Song for Occupations" in order to credit Whitman with the insight of understanding the topsy-turvy world of emerging capitalism, a world where social formations are perverted, one where Whitman is using scathing irony to insist that the proper recipients for his hand of friendship and support are "Men and women like you."[9]

A key line in Whitman's fussilade in "A Song for Occupations" is 'when the script preaches instead of the preacher.'[10] This acknowledges the presence of a form of

written document offering advice with talismanic power in its ordinances. It also hints that this 'script' lacks the input of the human author, or rather, of his full humanity, and that this results in dogmatic advice-giving, which is lacking in humanitarian feeling. It is my contention that Whitman can be shown to consistently oppose many of his fellow advice givers because their writings are of such an authoritarian nature.

Of course if the world turns topsy-turvy then one very healthy stratagem is to fight back in a topsy-turvy manner, and there are clear signs in "Poem of You, Whoever You Are" that Whitman adopts this tactic. It is useful to turn again to Webster's dictionary to take the measure of Whitman's veiled anger as he states that he should have "**blabbed** nothing but you[11]." [Emphasis Added] The entry for blab is :

> BLAB,v.t.
> 1.To utter or tell in a thoughtless manner; to publish secrets or trifles without discretion.
> 2. To tell, or utter in a good sense.
>
> BLAB,v.i. To tattle; to tell tales.
> BLAB,n. A babbler; a telltale; one who betrays secrets, or tells things which ought to be kept secret.

Only citation two carries any positive emphasis; otherwise he who blabs is censured for his thoughtlessness, his telling of tales and his total indiscretion. The final definition where one who babbles is termed a "blab" underlines further negative connotations of secrecy betrayed, which are confirmed in the dictionary entry for "babble" itself:

> BABBLE,v.i.

To utter words imperfectly or indistinctly, as children.
1. To talk idly or irrationally; to talk thoughtlessly.
2. To talk much; to prate; hence to tell secrets.
3. To utter sounds frequently, incessantly, or indistinctly; as a babbling echo; a babbling stream
BABBLE,v.t. To prate; to utter.
BABBLE,n. Idle talk; senseless prattle.

As discussed, previously, in exploring "happiness" the presence of a word entry in other definitions can be illuminating. 'Blab' is found in two, 'Bleb,' really only a respelling, and 'Loquacious,' in an entirely negative manner. 'Babble' is found in only one, that for 'Futile' – "Talkative; of no importance or effect." The cumulative effect of these entries is quite devastating – he who blab/babbles is talking irrationally, prattling idly and his indiscretions will have no effect anyway!

It is a shrewd tactic on Whitman's part to signal the nature of his own offering of advice on what and how to think about the self and to demarcate this as an alternative to others' views as precisely as he does with, "I should have blabbed nothing but you." The very descriptions "they" would employ as typifying frivolous and vacuous and literally useless advice in the form of words, so clearly delineated in the content of the definitions of "Babble" and "Blab," are pointedly, and systematically, reappropriated by Whitman as positives.

It is worth tracing. step by step, the manner in which Whitman sets out his alternative vision, his 'blab' concerning his reader, his blueprint for the construction of a "Hymn to You." Whitman announces he will deal with secrets – the line, "I whisper with my lips close to your ear,"[12] - clearly indicates such an activity. However, the secret to be disclosed, that ' None have done justice to you,/ you have not done justice to yourself,'[13] could only be kept undisclosed by those who have a

vested interest in such a silence; to pass on this secret is an act of liberation. Whitman announces he will set forth with almost brutal candour the deficiences in his reader which must be acknowledged, etc., 'You have not known what you are / you have slumbered upon yourself all your life.'[14] This is certainly not light "babbling" and he goes on to outline a problem of social unfulfillment that will now be addressed:

> What you have done returns already in mock-
> eries,
> Your thrift, knowledge, prayers, if they do not
> return in mockeries, what is their return?[15]

As was observed in previous analysis of Preface to "Leaves of Grass," Whitman's tropes based on commerce are often ironic, deploying irony to insist that the world of commerce lacks a full human dimension. The attentive reader is posed a considerable challenge with the terms "return in mockeries" and "return." Whitman challenges the reader that everything he has invested in so as to bring fulfilment has been in vain; that is the case in terms of economic prudence, "thrift," in terms of self- knowledge, "knowledge," and in terms of "prayers." I suggest that Whitman is indicating that time and effort has been wasted in prayer of the conventional spiritual type but, also, that the faith in acquiring 'knowledge' by following advice manuals is, it should be acknowledged, a wasted investment.

In Whitman's counter proposal what is offered is investment in advice which will produce a proper "return": 'there is no endowment in man or woman that is/ not tallied in you',[16] suggests an alternative offering, acknowledging the release of potential within each and every person. In the light of the simple platitudes

contained in so much of the advice-book materials it is highly significant that Whitman carefully chooses the description of the path of self-discovery and a path the advice-giver must share with him:

> I track through your windings and turnings – I
> come upon you where you thought eye should
> never come upon you[17].

The pun on "eye" is not unusual for Whitman, and suggests an advice-wielder who will dare to probe deep within the darker recesses of the contemporary reader he is assisting. "Windings and turnings" conveys, in brilliant fashion, both the evasive action of he who wishes not to be 'tracked' and the mental gymnastics of someone seeking a path to a deeper social fulfilment.

This fairly extensive analysis of the poem indicates that Whitman is, indeed, intent on mapping out a "blab" and a "babble" which is triumphantly antithetical to the implications of these terms as defined in Webster. In order for the advice to be truly liberating, so that the poet can claim, triumphantly, near the end,

> The hopples [18]fall from your ankles! You find an
> unfailing sufficiency,

the poet has to clearly indicate to the reader the precise nature of the imprisonment that other advice-givers consign him or her to, and the ugly detail of what it means to have metaphorical "hopples" on their mind.

Who then are the purveyors of the non-liberating advice? Who are those who, when he is at his most explicit, Whitman castigates for the following:

> None have understood you ..
> None but have found you imperfect ..
> None but would subordinate you...[19]

It is extremely important to pursue the issues this question opens up, not least because recent scholarship, virtually ignoring the emphasis by Thomas on a social and political context for the poem, has, consequently, failed to observe the biting critique within the poem, preferring to treat the poem as an example of "optimistic religiosity."[20]

By returning to the pages of *The American Phrenological Journal* and utilising some of the most recent research into phrenology as a cultural phenomenon we can begin to track which particular aspects of phrenology and other mind therapy movements Whitman was so ardently opposed to when he described the approaches taken as ones which sought to 'subordinate'[21] those he himself was seeking to help. Madeleine Sterne [22] has described the particular appeal phrenology had from the 1830s in America thus:

> Indeed the new science seemed to have a special relevance for the new country. To a nation in love with facts, it offered a whole body of facts about the mind, presented in those neat classifications that appealed to nineteenth-century America. To a nation receptive to newness in any form, it brought a new doctrine that *shed light on the dark recesses of the mind.* To a nation avid for the practical, it promised "a practical system of mental Philosophy."[23] [Emphasis Added]

She is also quite clear in spelling out how the certainty offered by phrenology was linked to the offer of a removal of a sense of personal guilt and the provision of a form of self-knowledge that facilitated self-improvement:

> Phrenology ... replaced doubt with the certainty that formed the foundation of the nineteenth-century American spirit. Phrenology took the burden away from the conscience and placed it on the will. In so doing it released those who believed in its tenets from the hold of Calvanist predestination. Man was no longer born depraved only to die condemned to fire and brimstone. If he had faults they were the results of over or underdeveloped organs and were subject to correction Even those who scorned the principles of phrenology profited from it, for it helped *create the sanguine climate of the times.* It encouraged in place of a sense of guilt, a self-knowledge that could lead to self-improvement.[24]

The image here is of self knowledge achieved at little cost other than the embracing of doctrines which engendered a *sanguine climate* within the culture of the times. Without fully explaining how the key elements of phrenology had this potentially negative effect, Sterne is pointing to the potential for phrenology to be considered as precisely that type of body of therapeutic knowledge that Whitman would mock in "Poem to You, Whoever You Are", as inculcating in the minds of its followers a state of mind where those in need of support are only 'walking the walks of dreams.' However, even as Sterne is insisting on a sympathetic and accurate appraisal of phrenology's positive link to reform, claiming that the ease with which its accent on perfectibility helped it "link with and, indeed, fuel, many of the reform movements that fermented during the century," she also exposes its darker side. She quotes from one of the self-promoting sound-bites, that run through *The American Phrenological Journal* of the 1840's and 50's, where phrenology is promoted as "that mighty engine for propelling human nature onward in its track of illimitable progression"[25] The trope reveals an emphasis on a rigid and mechanistic system which is to violently propel reform.

Of equal importance to Sterne's research is that of John Davies. Although phrenology still awaits a major work fully researching its cultural impact on both sides of the Atlantic, his is the most ambitious attempt to map phrenology dating from the 1950s.[26] It does, however, bear the stamp of its own era and the judgements made fail to do justice to the full complexity of phrenology as a popular movement within the culture of its time..

Davies' approach derives, in essence, from the framework most commonly termed the history of ideas, so that he astutely sums up phrenology as a "peculiar blend of moralistic deism and a religious teleology;"[27] However in a quite dismissive judgement, he also describes it as "an unstable compound of science, religion and morality."[28] He accurately places the movement squarely within an America which in mid-century was in social ferment, an America witnessing the rise of the common man and the decline of Calvinism and, consequently:

> In this era three leitmotifs were dominant in American thought –the moral law, the free individual, the mission of America – and these the phrenologist extolled so explicitly and strenuously as to almost parody them.[29]

Davies places much less emphasis on a detailed study of precisely what phrenology delivered to the common man, on who attended the lectures, read the journals, had his/her head read, or followed the advice in Fowler and Wells' advice books. However a range of general comments he does make are pertinent to the present discussion, relating as the do to the nurture of the individual.

Davies examines carefully phrenology's stress on individualism, with each man able to lift himself with the aid of phrenological science. He sees the masthead proclamation, 'Self-made or Never-made,' placed prominently in each and every edition *of The American Phrenological Journal* as one of Fowler's and phrenology's most important messages. He acknowledges that the phrenological books provided a "cure-all" recipe for the "common man," just as, he claims, books of popular psychology did in his own time.[30] His tone is one of patronising elitism but these remains valuable insights. Again, beneath the same patronising tone revealed in,

> Like Unitarianism, Universalism, and Transcendentalism phrenology taught that sobriety and virtue, chastity and self-improvement were the keys to the good life. The *musty earnestness* of its books preached self-culture and self- improvement to such a degree that they read like parodies of Dale Carnegie,[31] [Emphasis Added].

lie crucial insights as to how phrenology, via manuals of the 1850's and 60's, connects to manuals of material self improvement in the twentieth century and how it was born through links to transcendentalism and mainstream religious and spiritual movements, themselves arising out of the decline of Calvinism.

Most significantly, Davies pays tribute to phrenology via a range of quotes from Transcendentalists writing later in the nineteenth century. Of particular interest is an Emerson observation, discussed earlier, briefly, in my Introduction:

> Gall and Spurzheim's phrenology laid a rough hand on the mysteries of animal and spiritual nature, dragging down every sacred secret to a street show. The attempt ... had a certain truth in it; it felt connection where the professors denied it, and was a leading truth which had not yet been announced.[32]

This study has established that the epithet "felt connection" is an apt description of the intimate dialogue Whitman sought to open with his reader concerning the therapeutic power of the mind. It offers an indication of that aspect of early mainstream phrenology which Emerson praised and on which Whitman would focus in constructing an intimate poetic.

Most importantly, however, Davies provides us with two insights relating to the potential restrictive nature of phrenology as a set of ideas concerning the organisation of brain and mind, which determine a way of seeing social reality. These are relevant to precisely that part of phrenology that Whitman found unpalatable, and which "Poem of You, Whoever You Are" addresses directly. Firstly Davies typifies phrenology as offering a "safe radicalism;" even though it was capable of "inspiring hope in those conscious of their own deficiences," categorising it thus: "[it] was a safe radicalism – permissible within a constitutional frame of government because it preached reform rather than revolution."[33] Equally importantly, Davies suggests that the insistence on obeying natural law, a key motif in phrenology, especially in the George Combe exposition, which gained favour in America, was actually repressive, as it was expressed to the adherent as a commandment to health, something that had to be done, since, as Combe insisted:

> One had to regard the whole laws of the animal economy and of the universe as the direct dictates of the Deity: and in urging compliance with them, it is with the earnestness and deference due to a Divine command that I do it.[34]

Very often the enthusiastic editorial voice of Orson Fowler, even as it thundered out its exhortations about the potential of the individual and happiness that should be

sought, did, indeed, earnestly seek to place the recipient in the position of a mere suppliant, who must obey the self-evident dictat of an authoratively knowledgeable speaker, whose pronunciations must be obeyed, as in:

> In short, whoever experiences this feeling, sometimes called the blues, hypochondria, etc., may know that its cause is, not in his troubles themselves... but in the morbid and inflamed state of his system, and his cure of these blue-devils consists in obviating this cause. Let such remember that these fearful forebodings have an INTERNAL, not an external cause – are occasioned, not by any REAL trouble, but are purely imaginative – are consequent on the sickly action of Hope, Cautiousness and other faculties and should therefore be unceremoniously turned out of doors.[emphasis in original][35]

In a much more recent study Lisle Dalton,[36] examines the links between Whitman's poetic, Fowler's mid-century millenairianism, and popular religion, and explores the precise nature of what Whitman, in a key section of Democratic Vistas, was to call for as being wanted for "these states" - a "cheerful religious fervour." He seeks to establish the debt Whitman owed to phrenology in providing such a "fervour" "for the general character," an enigmatic phrase which hints at both the character of the nation and of the characteristic individual within the nation. In particular, through focusing on Fowler and Wells' books popularising phrenology, and on their pronouncements in the *American Phrenological Journal*, he seeks to establish that Whitman's exposure to these texts played a part in equipping him with a vocabulary to sustain a discourse with his contemporaries, one which can be understood as offering "a meaningful understanding of the world," and "a road map to self-improvement."[37]

Dalton makes good use of a range of research which was not available to Davies[38] in order to follow up each of the components in that crucial phrase, "Cheerful religious fervour." Observations such as the following provide valuable insights into the prescriptive optimism of phrenology and the common cause which was to be found in relation to a path of self-improvement between adherents of phrenology and liberal protestants in the antebellum period:

> Innate endowment was not destiny, just a challenge that was now better understood. It also contributed to the generally optimistic, *albeit often prescriptive*, tenor of phrenological literature. To help individuals reach their full mental and moral potential, phrenological enthusiasts advocated both institutional reconfiguration, such as penal and educational reform, and rigorous self-discipline, which for American advocates included temperance, anti-tobacconism, vegetarianism and the reduced consumption of vanity goods. A physical proof for God, social optimism, and emphasis on individual improvement helped phrenologists find a receptive audience among some religious groups, particularly liberal Protestants in Great Britain and the United States.[emphasis Added].[39]

It is very important that Dalton also takes care to identify, within Fowler's particular brand of phrenology, a radically anti- materialistic theme. He thus acknowledges Fowler's phrenology as a richer source for Whitman than Davies could, and opens up the possibility of Whitman drawing on and actually expanding Fowler's critique of contemporary materialism. As he fleshes out the millennarian vision Fowler expounded, he gives careful attention to the very powerful concept of antebellum America being conceived of as an organism, one akin to the individual. Fowler, he claims, even as he limns the arrival of a possible moment in history of attained perfection, is deeply troubled concerning the excesses brought about by over-developed acquisitiveness.[40]

He makes a powerful case for the importance of Fowler's anxiety concerning contemporary materialism by analysing a series of articles entitled "Progression a Law of Nature," which ran in *The American Phrenological Journal* from 1845 to 1847. An even stronger critique of the nation, however, one treating the nation as an organism with over-exercised phrenological attributes, is to be found in another series of articles. These had the dramatic title, "Existing Evils and Their Remedies," and ran from 1842 to 1844. Within this series, particular aspects of the financial and economic fabric of the times are vilified. As was common in Jacksonian America, paper currency is seen as a spreading evil and sometimes the diagnosis of the national body's ailing state is more detailed, as in the following:

> The CREDIT AND BANKING SYSTEMS, both essentially the same, appeal to and excite *Acquisitiveness and Hope mainly*, - organs already too large in the American head and character ,and therefore they should *not* be stimulated. But it is the organ of *Hope in particular*, that they excite most – an organ altogether too large, especially in the Northern states.[41] [Emphasis in original].

In other outbursts near the end of the series Fowler moves on to repetition of a diagnosis of over-excited Hope and Acquisitiveness, which is then capped by evidence of symptomatic psychological and physical dis-ease in the population and in the general economy:

> That everything as it now is all wrong is fully evinced by the hard times; the bad health, the misery and vexation of all classes. Man cannot change for the worse. He must follow the order and obey the laws of his nature or take the consequences.[42]

As is always the case with the leading articles, and, particularly, the editorial outpourings from Fowler's pen, there is a great deal of repetition and insistence on key tropes which reveal, indeed trumpet, the nature of the phrenological enterprise. One such trope which features very regularly in the early 40's is that of phrenology as an optic which enlightened phrenologists can use to view both the causes and the remedies of society:

TO PHRENOLOGISTS

> The spirit of Phrenology is a spirit of Benevolence. It desires to better the condition of mankind, and is generally guided by correct principles. This is the main cause of the devotion of its disciples. Looking with the optics of Phrenology, they for the first time discover many defects in our social system, many things to be wrong, many evils to be corrected. These same optics also show them the causes and the remedy of these evils. Phrenology opens the eyes of the intellect and expands the pulsations of the heart.[43]

Dalton is, thus, extremely useful in beginning to flesh out a Whitman who is indebted to Phrenology in a number of interesting ways which conflict and contrast: Whitman will rebel against the prescriptive moral didacticism which he identifies, whilst he will also expand and enlarge the key notions of constructing a spiritual, "cheerful" popular "religion," which Dalton correctly sees as a key component of phrenology, especially in the form formulated by Fowler and Wells. As such Dalton is of assistance in answering the key question concerning what is repressive in phrenology which necessitates Whitman's position in "Poem of You, Whoever You Are."

In terms of his interpretation of what deserves the title "religious," Dalton is careful to ascribe to phrenology the following description which clearly indicates a place

for it as a movement situated within popular religion and richly symbolic in its quest for social meaning:

> Thus in terms of form, content, and meaning, the phrenological movement might be better understood as a variant form of American popular religion. For all its subsequent deficiences as "science," phrenology was, at its peak, a richly symbolic attempt to understand human nature and human destiny, as such, it fulfilled the traditional role of religion by directly addressing questions of identity, social relations, and hope for the future.[44]

It has been a feature of this study to identify, clarify and fully contextualise the particularly direct mode of address that Whitman uses in the preface to *Leaves of Grass* and the principal poems studied in previous chapters. The description above by Dalton of the intellectual and spiritual directness that both religion and phrenology share is well made. It is equally important to acknowledge the associated directness of discourse style that phrenology, particularly in the *American Phrenological Journal*, made available to Whitman as a resource.

Interestingly Dalton, in discussing this directness of address, identifies, as many critics before him, the importance of Emerson's 1880 comment that, though "coarse and odious," phrenology had had "a certain truth about it; a felt connection."[45] His illuminating reading of just what that "Felt connection" consisted of in Whitman, as he reworked the phrenological resource, is that it can be found in "poems that link the personal and the cosmological."[46]

The emphasis of this study has been to suggest that a parallel enterprise for Whitman, shown in a series of poems in 1855-56, which are virtual tutorials in the therapeutic power of the mind, was to make a direct connection to contemporaries, by linking concerns of a personal nature, focusing on the anxieties of the self and

the improvement of the self, not to the cosmological, but to the mental. Emerson in the previously mentioned lecture, also spoke of this "connection" leading to a truth "which had not yet been announced." It has been suggested that the alluring truth on offer in the key poems of *Leaves of Grass* is that through a process of using one's mind a truly positive and healthy sense of self-esteem can be maintained. However Whitman is not constructing this connection in a vacuum; he is working not only with, but, as Dalton has demonstrated, against the materials in his culture, including, most importantly, the phrenological literature and related advice literature.

In order to understand Whitman's complex reception of this literature it is vital to gauge who in America, in the cultural context of the 1840's and 1850's, was being addressed by those advising them of the possibility of a road to self-improvement, especially when a pre-requisite for travel on that road was a willingness to fully utilise the powers of their mind. Who were the young people Whitman was so keen to address thus at the end of" Poem to You Whoever You Are"?

> Master or mistress in your own right over nature,
> Elements, pain, passion, dissolution.
> The hopples fall from your ankles! You find an
> Unfailing sufficiency.[47]

None of the critics recently discussed – Sterne, Davies, Dalton - probes to the same level of detail, the nature of the audience for phrenology as the impact and content of the phrenological message. In part this is attributable to the seductive nature of the commonly-held thesis that phrenology, and to a lesser extent mesmerism and spiritualism, swept through society in a great wave. However, before considering the relevance of Henry Ward Beecher as a case study, launching himself very successfully at the young people of the time, there are two avenues to follow in

order tointerogate the audience. One involves revisiting the style of Fowler's oratory and the other requires following a lead contained in one of Dalton's notes.

Fowler is, as ever, direct and forceful in setting out, in an 1854 Editorial Prospectus, the relevance his journal has for his younger contemporaries:

> EDUCATION
>
> Will occupy much attention, especially Home Education and Self-Culture, and just that kind of knowledge which the parent needs in the discharge of his or her duties, will be liberally imparted. THE YOUNG, also will find the JOURNAL a friend and foster-father, to encourage them in virtue, shield them from vice, and prepare them for usefulness and success in life.[48]

In this instance, "relevance" is, obviously, heavily parent-orientated, as the parents are the first to be addressed as the main vehicle for education of the young. Unlike Whitman in "Poem to You, Whoever You Are," Fowler will not deal directly and intimately with his young audience. He prefers mediation of his advice via dutiful parents. It is noticeable, also, when the young are addressed, just what is the nature of the hypothesised relationship between the editor, the voice of the Journal, and the young person: it is that of a 'friend,' but this link transmutes immediately to another, that of 'foster-father.' This is a figure who, in fulfilling his role, is primed to despatch his duties of care in a very protective, virtue-inculcating manner.

This particular "relationship," one which consists of friendship which rapidly elides into moralistic pseudo-parental control, where the young person is conceived of as, metaphorically, having lost his true parents as he struggles to make his way in society is one that features strongly in the advice books in antebellum America. The

next chapter will utilise the considerable research undertaken into this phenomenon to examine Whitman's view of Henry Ward Beecher. This "relationship" Whitman replaces with a less parental – orientated model, one offering more scope for individual growth: one where the individual must be challenged to *realise* his potential in both senses of the word ; firstly to be aware of his potential and, secondly to take steps to release that same potential, or as the poem under discussion puts it, to activate his or her "unfailing sufficiency,"

The endnote to Dalton's important assertion concerning phrenology, that it is a "a richly symbolic attempt to understand human nature and destiny" cites a powerful study, by Cooter, which investigates the place of phrenology in culture.[49] In the absence of a detailed examination of the place of phrenology in American culture this study is invaluable. Cooter's study is a most rigorous analysis of the social context in which phrenology flourished, exploring the ideological purposes it served, the succour it offered to a mass audience at a time of rapid industrial and social change, and the intellectual origins of the "movement." It also traces its origin on the continent and its rapid adoption in both Britain and America. Cooter is very alive to the interconnection of the phrenological movements on either side of the Atlantic; Spurzheim visited America , where he was lionised and, indeed, died suddenly; George Combe was famous in America, and the Fowlers successfully toured Britain. However, as the sub-title of his book suggests, his principal interest is in demonstrating how phrenology, especially related to its uptake in the mechanics' institutes, could serve the purpose of "managing" or negotiating consent to the emergent capitalism of the Victorian era, for a considerable body of working class artisans.

He is clear that phrenology appealed to many of a liberal frame of mind, intent on reform:

> Thus as dozens of scholarly publications testify, phrenology was to become in the English-speaking world an important vehicle of liberal ideology, helping to effect major reforms in penology, education, and the treatment of the insane.[50]

He also places great emphasis on the importance of the influence, on both sides of the Atlantic, of a brand of more moralistic phrenology, emanating from George Combe, and centred on his immensely influential work *The Constitution of Man.* In referring to how Spurzheim, in part, and Combe, in major fashion, reformulated the original work of Gall, he makes this comment: "Without substantially altering the doctrine in any of its essentials, they elaborated it differently from Gall in order to have it appeal to an *expanding population of practical-minded improvers.* [Emphasis Added][51]

Cooter is insistent that this emphasis on the re-formulation of phrenology into a version emphasising practical improvement, one akin to the Fowler and Wells formulation, is possible because it is built on solid foundations traceable in Gall's original model of the mind. The description of that foundation is worth quoting at length:

> By its application comprehensively to explain human nature on the basis of a mapped-out hierarchical division of mental labour, by its promise to provide at a stroke practical solutions to the mysteries of character, personality, talent or its lack, crime and madness (hence, potentially directly to manipulate and control behaviour); and by its steady comprehension to even the meanest intellect, Gall's doctrine beckoned into its orbit every one of the social, psychological, intellectual, political and religious concerns that had been aggravated and heightened by the conditions of rapid and pervasive social

> and economic change. To those open to its possibilities it seemed to offer a revolutionary new basis for conceiving and hence organising social life. Resembling popular versions of ethology and psychoanalysis and even some forms of Marxism in our own time (though far more popular than any of these), phrenology became for some a dogma of enlightenment as well as *a refreshing river in which to wash away or drown confusions and disorientations.*[52] [emphasis added]

The key phrase here 'a dogma of enlightenment and promise' accurately describes the characteristic tone of Orson Fowler's editorials with their unequivocal promises, their declarations concerning the natural laws of the mind and, indeed, the elevated role for those who assiduously pursue the development of the designated phrenological attributes:

> Those at all acquainted with the editor's style of writing or lecturing, will readily comprehend his manner of treating these and other subjects that come appropriately within the wide range of phrenological, physiological, and magnetic science. Our field is indeed the world. Not only is it already ripe for the harvest, but it is becoming corrupted and all overgrown with tares of uncleanliness and thistles of sin. To receive the good into vessels, but to cast the bad away, will be the object of every successive number of this work. Those, therefore, who drop tears of sorrow over fallen humanity, or who would lend a helping hand to its restoration may perhaps do good as effectively by circulating this work as in any other way; for its pages may embody both the seeds and core of all reform. Human improvement and happiness are designed to be inscribed on its every page, its every line.[53]

Fowler's exhilarating claim is that it is a design feature of the very discourse of the journal that it shall be capable of re-forming the individual and, in turn, society. Equally interesting is the claim, in the final section of Cooter's observation, that a core appeal of phrenology is the offer of a social therapeutic of immense promise – able to 'drown confusions and disorientation.' Additionally, as he seeks to establish one of the idee fixe of phrenology, one present from Spurzheim on, one central to phrenology's vaunted claims to help the individual cope with change, Cooter comments:

> As with so many others of his generation, the derivative notion of natural hierarchical divisions of labour in life and society governed over by universal determinant laws increasingly became an idee fixe in the midst of learning to live with change ...
> ...We need, that is, to try to reconstitute his [Combe's] gaze[into Spurzheim's map and guidebook to cerebral reality] by decoding the Science's signs and symbols and discovering how they rationed, limited and filtered access to reality at the same time as they disclosed it.[54]

Gradually, and with care, Cooter identifies those aspects of phrenology which offer reassurance in the face of social complexity and potential confusion In this regard the importance of the phrenological head as a key revelatory symbol emerges from his research. It is seen as indicative of an idealistic view of the nature of mental reality, one capable of offering alluring reassurance. This becomes particularly clear in the final sentence of the following:

> Not unlike gazing through the open front of a Victorian doll's house, gazing at a phrenological head confronts one not only with order and classification par excellence, but also (just as with the actual domestic workings of the middle-class Victorian home) with a clear hierarchy of spaces for specialised functions and duties. No aspect of human behaviour and no action is incapable of allocation in the classification scheme; everyone can be seen to have his or her proper place and duty. Like the horizontal classification, symmetry, and regularity that the Hutchinsonian found in the earth's crust and that allowed him to see disorder, confusion, and regularity as reflecting back upon God's order in nature, *phrenology allowed the chaotic, the ambiguous, and the arbitrary in the environment to reflect back upon nature's rational order in the human mind.*[55][Emphasis Added]

In his insistence on the importance of the vitalistic nature of phrenology Cooter drives home the 'shelter' that was on offer, whilst also indicating the troublesome social arena necessitating resort to such protection:

> In part, because it subsumed mechanical function within a vitalistic framework, the organismic metaphor offered shelter from the frightening

> social and intellectual reverbations arising from the new technology and commercial growth, but at the same time, precisely because the metaphor lacked the hard-edged, causal, reductive materialist dimensions of Newtonian mechanism, it more readily facilitated a toleration of and a coming to terms with the emergent structures and relations of industrial capitalism.[56]

As will be shown in the next chapter, America of the 1840's and 50's was awash with advice books urging the young to work hard, be virtuous. and help themselves to potential riches. Cooter skilfully traces the aspect of phrenology which provides a pseudo-scientific rationale for such enterprises:

> Largely as a result of the way in which Spurzheim popularised the science in Britain, phrenology was seen as radically attacking inherited power and wealth through an assertion of the prior claims of an "inheritance of talents," theoretically fluid and endlessly progressive. Phrenology .... partly displaced the whole idea of inheritance with the *idea of self-help and industry* .... it emerged that only those who worked hard to fully exercise and/or develop their moral and intellectual faculties could hope to be socially superior.[57] [emphasis added]

In his early poems Whitman adopts a direct and apparently intrusive voice – pursuing you wherever you go, claiming knowledge of your every emotion and thought, constantly haranguing you to consider him the first person to truly understand you – and this is, indeed, present in "Poem of You, Whoever You Are":

> None have understood you, but I understand you
> None have done justice to you, you have not done
> Justice to yourself.[58]

Such a rhetoric can be partly understood as arising from Whitman's driven belief, imbued from phrenology, that insight into the soul or essence of another human being is no longer the sole business of an elite, whether spiritual or temporal. As Cooter asserts, the revelations on the head's surface can lead to "demystification of

self"[59] In contrast to the Whitman's "intrusion," which in "Poem of You, Whoever You Are" is insistently non commanding, "...I *only* am he/ who would never consent to subordinate you," [Emphasis Added]; "I am he who places over you no master,"[60] stands that of George Coombe. Cooter carefully explores the appeal[61] that George Coombe's book *Constitution of Man* had and sees its appeal as resting partly on its intrusive offer of order and control. He typifies one significant aspect of the book, and by implication the phrenology that informs the book thus:

> Though ostensibly an objective description of the natural relations between man and his environment, the Constitution of Man was in reality a scientistic prescription for daily living, modes of conduct, and social relations – a literal" "constitution" for social behaviour based on *a politically symbolic constitution of mental organisation.*[62] [Emphasis Added]

It cannot be overemphasised how accurate a description this is of the advice literature relating to personal conduct, self improvement and social etiquette of Whitman's time which Whitman reacts so emphatically against. Cooter does a great service in mapping the conservative and repressive nature of the "politically symbolic constitution" referred to here. He clarifies how deep was the quest for order in the face of change within phrenology:

> In acting as both compass and map for self-orientation in the fragmenting social world, the hierarchical physics of brain permitted an exchange of impressions of senselessness, purposelessness and anarchy for those of order, pattern and control.[63]

He is careful, however, to spell out the limitations of such an alluring offer to those unsure of their social situation, and in doing so alludes to an Emerson comment:

> The knowledge[64] ... it's making the intangible world of emotions tangible, contributed to give a sense of precision to experience, order to reality, logic to contradiction. To Emerson there seemed no doubt that it was "the pleasure arising from Classification that makes Calvinism, Popery, (and) Phrenology run and prosper,"[65] With mental reality thus reduced, unified, indexed, and ordered life could be slipped from its social moorings and become utterly comprehendable psychologistically.[66]

He thus emphasises the sheer attraction of the reductive model of mental reality that phrenology offered and to which Whitman was so resistant. That resistance is heard near the climax of "Poem of You, Whoever You Are," in "...whatever you are promulges itself, ...what you are picks its way."[Emphasis Added].[67] Cooter's analysis provides valuable insight into phrenology as a symbolic resource system and catalogues its attractions while not ignoring its limitations as a window on society, or lens through which to view a disturbed and troubling social reality. It has been shown that Whitman was content to borrow the mode of address he found in the Fowler version of phrenology, but anxious to avoid the seductively ordered certainty of the mental mapping it involved, and deeply concerned not to construct a relation with his reader which bore any resemblance to the didactic, moralistic, one found in Combe, then in Fowler, and then, fulsomely, in the advice manuals of his time. Cooter's analysis confirms the wisdom of Whitman's caution.

Before examining those manuals in detail, in the next chapter, it is worth listening to two voices, who will, in their respective ways, help us realise the need Whitman felt to strike up a "felt connexion" with his contemporaries, a need which, in being centred on concern for the suffering individual, rather than seeking to control him or her, was striking an entirely contrasting note to that offered by phrenology when it offered its mental wares. These voices will assist, also, in explaining why Whitman wanted his "blabbing" to focus on the particular "You" his poetic sought to reach,

someone capable of thinking for his or her self, and not relying solely on him, as poet, or provider of assistance.

First is a 1850 reader's letter to the *American Phrenological Review*, from J Brown Jr. As a doctor he has had the opportunity to examine the skull of an Englishman who has, quite literally, blown his brains out. In a short letter he conveys his obvious excitement at the opportunity to do a bit of empirical phrenological fieldwork:

> His cerebral developments, when taken in connection with some circumstances in his history, in addition to this last act of his life, render his case to me somewhat interesting in a *Phrenological point of view."*[emphasis in original].

He goes on to describe his quick "examination" in some detail:

> After the coroner and his jury had retired, and all others left the room, I proceeded to an examination of his head, which I effected, as well as I could, amid blood and mutilation.

His conclusion is that here is a wonderful proof of the sufficiency of phrenology as a classificatory system since:

> The first that attracted my attention was his extreme deficiency of the reflective organs.The superior portion of his forehead was very much depressed or flattened. Self-esteem, Hope, Benevolence, Causality and Comparison, moderate. Firmness, Veneration. Conscienciousness, Cautiousness, and Secretiveness, full. Acquisitiveness, *very large*.[68] [emphasis original]

There follows a short biography of the poor suicide to "prove" that acquisitiveness was his downfall. Nothing, however, can detract from the sheer exhilaration of that communicated moment of discovery, midst the mangled skull, of an enlarged mental organ which is, obviously, a triumph for phrenology as a system. This is an extreme example, but is indicative of the seductive power of a system which seeks to explain, through classification, all action and motivation. It also suggests how human compassion can be the victim of the quest to classify and to triumphantly "understand."

The second, unintentionally cautionary, voice is that of a young Glaswegian workingman, cited by Cooter. He is giving a valedictory address to Orson Fowler in Glasgow in 1863:

> Mr Fowler gives us higher and more ennobling views of the mission and destiny of the human race than we had. His teaching is somewhat different than what we are accustomed to. We are no longer told we are poor, depraved, miserable, evil-disposed wretches, and that, if we get anything better than misery and unhappiness here, and something worse hereafter, we get more than we deserve. Mr Fowler shows us by the light of phrenology that ... not only are we privileged, but it is our *duty,* so to use them (mental faculties) for the purpose of *raising ourselves mentally and morally*, and that it is not blasphemy to aspire to as near to the perfection of our Creator as an earthly nature will admit.[69] [emphasis added].

The light of phrenology, a trope so beloved by its practitioners, and portrayed here, will illuminate a path where this artisan has been taught that he must be duty-bound to improve himself both mentally and morally. This is a path of duty which this study has been examining as it shines forth in *The American Phrenological Journal* and in advice books. It is, most emphatically, not the path of the "Poem of the

Road" nor the path Whitman was indicating when he pointed his listener to the discovery of "unfailing sufficiency" in "Poem of You Whoever You Are", and structured the poem as a critique of just such, "illuminating", advice as typified by the phrenology being lauded here.

As Cooter, in particular, has shown in his study of phrenology's offer of a "shelter" to its recipients, of a place to wash away confusions, that alluring offer brought what Whitman could not accept. The sheltered place is one where the "endowment" of individual selfhood is denied, where only that which can be "tallied," that is categorised and classified in a system, is of value, where the effulgent flow of thought is stifled. "Poem of You, Whoever You Are" goes straight to the listener and defiantly "blabs" a warning of the dangers of seeking shelter in that dangerous place.

■■■

1855 and 1856 and to consider the usefulness of such a discourse pattern in relation to Whitman's therapeutic intentions. Whilst much has been written concerning Whitman's therapeutic stance in relation to physical health, the emphasis in the present study has been on mental therapeutics and Whitman's complex, often highly critical, relation to programmes of mental self-improvement available to Americans in the 1840s and 1850s.

In his recent study of Whitman's poetic in relation to themes concerning death, Harold Aspiz considers the direct address employed by Whitman, in the poems of 1856:

> Operating immeasurably to Whitman's advantage in these poems is his deliberately ambiguous use of the pronoun "you" -- .... sometimes the "you" seems to imply a single listener whom the persona addresses as an equal, an intimate friend, or a lover.[70]

Aspiz makes two observations highly relevant to the present study, one concerning a single poem, and another concerning the entire 1856 edition of *Leaves of Grass*. Firstly, as briefly examined in my Introduction, he categorises the second edition of the poems thus:

> The 1856 edition of *Leaves of Grass* not only has the outward appearance of a Fowler and Wells self-help manual but it also reflects some of the firm's ideologies. The handsomely produced volume is the most popularistic edition of the poems. Some of the new poems picture the Whitman persona as a teacher-confessor who adopts the pose of a guru addressing a working-class crowd that is eager to take his hand and hear that they, as self-reliant Americans, are eligible for physical and spiritual advancement.[71]

This is a penetrating insight into the wider significance of the 1856 edition considered in the light of the pseudo-sciences of the time. The emphasis on the persona targeting a working-class audience, the offering to them of advice on how

to raise their self-esteem and the categorisation of the persona as a "teacher-confessor," all are congruent with the present study.

The analysis undertaken in previous chapters has endorsed the approach outlined by Aspiz, but I suggest it has also extended some of the conclusions drawn. Whilst the persona is indeed a teacher-confessor, the teacher role, which Whitman adopts in the poems comprising this present study, is more deliberate and detailed in its exposition than that of a guru, who might only give glimpses of the promised riches. Whitman, to use his own words, is "in and out of the game" to a significant extent ; as shown previously in the examination of major poems in the 1855 and 1856 *Leaves of Grass*, he is acutely aware of obstacles to the innovatory thinking which might lead to self -realisation, and consequently, he cajoles and challenges, just as much as he leads. Perhaps most significantly, although he borrows from the ideologies Aspiz asks us to consider, he sees clearly the restrictive aspects inherent in their world view and seeks to challenge them.

In addition, Aspiz turns his attention to one particular poem from the 1856 edition. He places significant emphasis on identifying that the conclusion of "Poem of You, Whoever You Are" is "seeking to instill faith and self-trust in the American populace of the 1850's ..... its heady visionary promise of a better life in this world and the next is the high-water mark of Whitman's optimism."[72] In his brief description of the poem, Aspiz touches on how Whitman engages with the obstacles that stand in the way of the listener, in order to "find themselves eternal" they must "trust their own instincts as distinct from second hand ideas."[73] The analysis of the poem earlier in this chapter focused on just such second hand ideas

and thought processes, as they came under Whitman's scrutiny, and suggested they were represented as shackles imprisoning Whitman's readers.

It is also possible to claim that in addition to the gestural promise which Aspiz correctly identifies as a key element at the centre of the poem,

"In an intimate gesture, as both lover and guru he places his hand on a representative 'you' and whispers that he alone perceives and celebrates his or her potential greatness,"[74]

there is another promise made which takes a central position. It is to engage intellectually with the "you" seeking to jolt him or her into awareness of those who keep them "walking the walks of dreams." If the lover's hand gesture is crucial, so is the gesture glimpsed in Whitman's regretful comment, which in turn spurs his resolution, "I should have made my way straight to you." [75] Behind the remark lies a lover-teacher who wishes to think fully and completely of the other, and his or her thoughts. The gesture is one of direct, loving, thought.

Only recently has lyric poetry been investigated to trace the theme of the mind, its action and powers an intriguing component. A major contribution to this research is *Poets Thinking,* where Helen Vendler devotes a chapter to Whitman. She focuses on two short lyric poems to establish her argument that lyrics can encapsulate a particular form of thinking, and to suggest that a part of the thought processes involved is instruction to the reader as to how to read the poem. There are three epigrams to her chapter entitled "Walt Whitman Thinking," and it is the following,

the third, which is of interest in relation to the emphasis it places on disavowing others who seek to teach you to "think."

> Remember how many pass their whole lives and hardly once think
> And never learned themselves to think,
> Remember before all realities must exist their thoughts.[76]

The source is a widely neglected uncollected manuscript fragment, "Who Wills With His own Brain":[77]

> Who wills with his own brain, the sweet of the float of the earth descends and surrounds him,
> If you be laborer or apprentice or solitary farmer, it is the same
>
> Have you known that your limbs must not dangle?
> Have you known that your hands are to grasp vigorously?
> You are also to grasp with your mind vigorously
>
> Remember how many pass their whole lives and hardly once think and never learned themselves to think,
> Remember before all realities must exist their thoughts.
>
> As to you, if you have not yet learned to think, enter upon it now,
> Think at once with directness, breadth, aim, conscientiousness,
> You will find a strange pleasure from the start and grow rapidly each successive week.

The editors of the *Reader's Edition* express their views that "the last line of this trenchant counsel is cancelled in the MS but rightly preserved by Bucke, who transcribes it as part of a larger fragment ..... the entire composition, as transcribed here and in *N and F* constitutes an incomplete poem."[78] I wish to explore the benefits of further consideration of the coherence correctly claimed for the fragment, and establishing such coherence as relating to the delivery of "trenchant counsel" concerning the power of therapeutic thought. Another way of exploring the weight that I believe this fragment can bear will be to consider it as equivalent to

one of Whitman's "Inscriptions," those pithy poems so revealing of the major themes and modes of address of the major poems.

Firstly, the putative title, taken from the first line, demands attention. It is instructive to consider "One's Self I Sing" and "Who Wills" alongside each other in order to examine their linguistic form and their message. In the case of the former the key linguistic play is the ambiguity of "I sing": the persona is both singing about necessary qualities, and, through being the poet who does this, resonating with the same qualities. In other words the poem both announces and enacts the poetic launch of "The modern man."

In similar fashion the linguistic play in "Who Wills" indicates and enacts the power available , in this case, to the reader. The message is that this power can be tapped provided he thinks clearly and positively about himself, free from the baggage of those whose instructional models have shackled him. He who wills, in the sense of bringing into being and grasping, through thought, a new selfhood, is also successful in another way: in the sense of being assured that change will take place: that this is so is indicated by the tense marker, 'will,' not 'shall.'

The first line sweeps to the alluring promise of a quasi-religious experience for anyone who capable of individual focused thought. It is important to examine the key terms used here in order to demonstrate that major themes relating to the liberated individual, those first indicated in the poems of 1855 and 1856, are being referred to. The "sweet of the float" echoes an allusion to the transfixing attraction of immortality in the final verse of "To Think of Time":

I swear there is nothing but immortality
That the exquisite scheme is for it, and the
Nebulous float is for it[79]

The effulgent radiance, pictured as being released from individuals' brains in "To You Whoever You Are," strikes a similar note:

From my hand from the brain of every man and woman it
Streams, effulgently flowing for ever.[80]

Perhaps the poem where the thematic links can be most conclusively traced is "Song of the Road." When extolling the virtue of "a great personal deed," the persona of this poem describes the poetic space he envisages:

Here a great personal deed has room .....
Its effusion of strength and will overwhelms law
And mocks all authority and all argument against it.[81]

He dares to see the poem as a place within which deeds have a mental realization located in the text but capable of flowing out from it. This daring conception echoes line one of "Who Wills." There is another key thematic link between this fragment and "Poem of the Road." The wisdom which is held out as attainable, as a guaranteed benediction, once correctly grasped, in "Poem of the Road," is, in description, very similar to the clear thinking, the potency of which comes under scrutiny in "Who Wills":

It (wisdom) is the certainty of the reality and immortality of things and
The excellence of things;

> Something there is in the float of the sight of things that
> Provokes it out of the soul.[82]

In terms of the key theme of will power, it is worth considering the similarity of the force the persona in "Song of Myself" describes

> I seize the descending man and raise him with relentless will
> I dilate you with tremendous breath, I buoy you up,

to the power of will exercised by the novice thinker being addressed in line one of "Who Wills."

By carefully identifying the key themes which lie behind the grand rhetorical flourish of the first line of "Who Wills", wisdom, immortality, and personal self-fulfillment, it is possible to see that the purpose of this grand gesture is to triumphantly announce that these, all key elements in the early major poems, can be achieved by mental focus and discipline. Whom the persona has in mind as capable of such benefits, and just what obstacles stand in the way, is the business of the rest of the poem.

The breezy second line seeks to avoid any possible consideration that the target audience might be any single section of society, but it is selective, even as it seeks apparent inclusiveness. If we place the poem as contemporary with the early editions of *Leaves of Grass*, then the audience indicated is the generation caught up in the massive changes as young men move from an agrarian Jacksonian society into cities to hold down apprenticeships. As many commentators have shown the artisanal culture itself, and with it the security of apprenticeships, was in a state of

critical flux, so we have here a glimpse, and only that, of the social context in which the promise of enrichment through "the brain" might provide succour.

The second verse moves out of the declarative mode into interrogation and a command that is promissory. The persona teases the reader with the accusation that, although he may have been aware that a healthy body is only possible through constant active deployment of limbs and hands, he has not *grasped* [the pun is built on the parallelism of physical and mental seizure] the importance of using the mind actively. The term 'vigorously' conceals almost as much as it reveals: on the one hand it suggests the force with which the body and mind must act, but it also hints at other facets of mind power which are less clear. While one can certainly grasp an idea, one can also be in the grip of an idea, and thus not in complete control.

The tantalising nature of 'vigorously' may well be a deliberate ploy by the persona, with its complex implications sustained as the next verse unfolds. These lines takes the form of a 'reminder' to the reader. The persona's comments imply that it will be helpful for the reader-disciple to ponder on the limited nature of the thought processes of his contemporaries. These are categorised as spending their whole lives not thinking in a meaningful way; the real admonition is that they never thought for themselves, with Whitman conveying this in an interestingly cryptic syntactic phrase – 'never learned themselves to think.'[83] The phrase 'before all realities' in the next line subtly reminds the reader that thought should be a prime mover and determine reality. The range of meanings for 'before' is intriguing, tantalising and alluring at one and the same time. Existing previously in time is suggested, as is having priority of importance. This combination reminds the reader

that humans think before acting and, a more alluring thought, that the mind and thinking are of the highest importance.

In the final verse the persona returns to a stance which combines imperious command with alluring promise as he rveaks the final details of the shape of the new thinking programme being advocated . The opening 'as to you' keeps the reader on track, puts him/her in the limelight, and gently ensures there is no escape from the realisation that the persona is talking to, and demanding action from, each individual. The "invitation" to enact new thought processes only if your current deficiencies make this requisite is a kind of ironic, playful, tease, since the persona has clearly outlined in the earlier verses just how urgent the situation is. Next, in a grand theatrical climax, the learner is invited to 'enter upon it now.' This phrase neatly captures certain key aspects and benefits of thinking in this new way. Firstly, it retains that feeling of religious experience previously suggested in verse one; one enters a shrine or enters upon an new level of consciousness. Secondly, it balances this with the suggestion of a practical scheme of training and improvement being undertaken; one starts or enters on a course or programme of study. This two-pronged approach, combining religious aspirations and practical training will be of great significance in Whitman's writings during and after the Civil War.

The penultimate line reaffirms the urgency of the realignment being advocated, 'at once' comes hard on the heels of 'now' at the end of the previous line, leading to a hammering out of components of the new thinking. Two of these components are almost tautological, 'directness' and 'aim,' as the persona desperately seeks to stress the practical and utilitarian nature of the required thinking. 'Aim,' indeed, nicely

coveys an implied critique of general speculative thinking, whilst also suggesting an alluring potency; the representation is of picking off a target and through thought directing yourself with precision.. Perhaps the most intriguing component, however is "conscientiousness."

If this poem acts as a template for the exposition of a new mode of thinking it would appear that what is being advocated and promised is a pathway by means of thought to something akin to a religious experience ; however the route taken must involve being focused on your task and the taking of great care and attention. The notion of regular practical application of new thought powers is sustained in the final line's "grow rapidly each successive week." Whitman is suggesting a course of treatment, with benefits accruing to whoever stays on programme. And the benefits are considerable, since right from "the start" you are promised "a strange pleasure." Both words in this phrase bear scrutiny.

The promise of the experience being novel accounts for its being described as 'strange' However, if we consider this epithet in the light of the rest of the poem, it also indicates that the recipient should expect and anticipate a new self to be born from the change of mental direction, and that this transformation will, initially, be unsettling. Whitman is showing a subtle awareness of the problems of mental adjustment. I would suggest that in the final lines Whitman is feeling his way to proposing that individualistic, self -generated thought is so dissimilar to situations where one is instructed, controlled by the thoughts of other advice-givers, such as Weaver, Fowler and Beecher, that the consequences are as disturbing as they are liberating. In the case of "pleasure," the persona sets down a very careful marker.

Obviously the implications of "pleasure" have accrued from the unfolding process of the poem so we come to see this state of enjoyment as composed of a number of elements: the satisfaction of achieving a new vigorous self capable of decisive thought and action, the pleasure of thinking for oneself rather than being guided by others and the euphoria of an almost religious satisfaction derived from a re-born self.

Of particular interest is the political element inherent in these pleasures. Though the satisfaction lies with the individual, the pleasure consists in regaining autonomy and control, wresting it back from those who, through the advice they offer, can be seen as symbols of the forces wishing to regulate control and restrict the individual. It is useful to consider Whitman, in all his early poetry, as interested in championing the potential re-birth of individuals in danger of losing their autonomy due to the particular shape ante bellum American economics and culture was taking. This is an area which has been explored by M Wynn Thomas in relation to the challenge to artisan selfhood from emerging capitalism, and by M Jimmie Killingsworth in relation to discourses concerning the body.

In his influential study *Whitman's Poetry of the Body* M Jimmie Killingsworth focuses on Whitman's ability to adopt radical tropes, centred around the body, related to conventional contemporary medical and moral advice, in order to create a revolutionary language, one in an oppositional relation to what Killingsworth calls the '"dead" literal language of friendship and love.'[84] I suggest that in "Who Wills" we can see some clear, decisive, pointers to a enterprise, very similar to that which Killingsworth describes in Whitman's treatment of sexual politics, but in the case

of many of the early major poems, and as outlined in this inscription-like poem it is the politics of the mind.

Killingsworth argues for a diminution of radicalness on Whitman's part after the first two editions of *Leaves of Grass,* what he calls a "progressive chastening of his sexual politics."[85] He thus provides us with an important question relating to Whitman's interest in the power of the mind. Is there the same trajectory of loss, as he traces in the politics of the body, in the case of Whitman's politics of the mind, Whitman's ongoing attempt to formulate a therapeutic of the mind?

The remaining chapters of this study address that question and I propose to use "Who Wills" to set up the investigation. The peculiar status of these lines as a text assist in that process. As my detailed reading establishes it is replete with echoes of major texts which are at the core of the first two editions. This leads to the reasonable conjecture that it could originate from any period up to and including the third edition of 1860. I suggest that it operates in the same manner as many of the notebook entries, as a working-through of major issues that will feed into key poems. I suggest, moreover, that it deals with issues concerning the power of the mind which span all three editions, containing at least three discernible strands

Firstly, it crystallises the yearning for an almost religious experience to be gained by a focusing of the mind ; one yielding wisdom, a sense of immortality. Secondly it reaffirms most strongly Whitman's almost frantic belief that the young of his society who followed advice givers were not only failing to use their own minds, but were actually losing their autonomy, and needed a model for independent thought..

Finally, especially in the last verse, we can glimpse the outlines of a tantalising therapeutic package, one combining a religious experience with constant practical self-application and "conscientiousness." I propose to relate the method of answering Killingsworth's question to these three strands.

The first task, in the next chapter, picks up the first strand, to duly measure where Whitman stood in relation to the fiercest exponent of advice-giving filled with a dutiful religiosity, Henry Ward Beecher. This leads on to an examination of texts from the 1860 edition of *Leaves of Grass* in order pose the following. Did Whitman continue to fiercely argue, as in strand two, for a therapeutic of the mind that championed individuals, radically free individuals, or can a more spiritualised, possibly more pragmatic and "conscientious" therapeutic of the mind be detected, one resembling strands one and three?

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[1] Entry "To You": *Walt Whitman: An Encyclopedia,* p.735. Terry Mulclaire traces a sequence of critics- James, Kaplan, Reynolds, who detect a quest for individual, mostly spiritual, fulfilment in the poem. However the goal is seen as an abstract one.
[2] Leaves of Grass 1856, p.207
[3] Ibid., p 207.
[4] Ibid., p.208
[5] Thomas, *Lunar Light* p.23.

[6] Ibid.
[7] Ibid., p.24.
[8] Leaves of Grass 1856, p..206.
[9] Variorum, I. p.98 l.151.
[10] Ibid., l. 145
[11] Leaves of Grass 1856, p. 207.
[12] Ibid., p. 206 l. 9.
[13] Ibid., p. 207 l. 7
[14] Ibid., p, 208 l. 2.
[15] Ibid., ll. 4-5.
[16] Ibid., p.208 l. 13
[17] Ibid., l. 12
[18] Webster's 1828 Dictionary has the following definition – vt. To tie the feet near together to prevent leaping; as to hopple an unruly horse. This conveys a picture of unruliness being controlled. Whitman is surely championing the release of the "unruly" power of the mind and of "leaping".
[19] Leaves of Grass 1856s, p.207 ll. 6-9.
[20] Entry for "To You" in *Walt Whitman:an Encyclopedia*, ed. J.R. LeMaster and Donald D. Kummings (New York: Garland,1998): "The most interesting recent discussion of the poem is in David S. Reynold's *Walt Whitman's America :A Cultural Biography (*New York: Vintage,1996). Reynolds focuses on the techniques of the luminist painters of the time involving "idealising light everywhere." (pp. 297-298). He correctly identifies that while they focus on nature Whitman directs our attention to the "light emanating from humans." In terms of the current poem under discussion he explores the line – "from my hand the brain of every man and woman it streams, effulgently flowing forever." Reynolds, however, fails to give due attention to Whitman's challenge to the reader that the light flows from a liberated mind. Reynolds does categorise Whitman's opposition to "much antebellum painting" due to it "being restricted to purveying a social complacency behind the prevailing style which seemed to announce that nature, God and humanity could be neatly summed up and delivered to the viewer in optimistic packages" (Ibid). It is my contention that contemporary advice-givers are targets in Whitman's sights in "Poem to You, Whoever You Are" being guilty of the same malpractice as these artists.
[21] Leaves of Grass 1856, p. 208 l. 9.
[22] Her work on the Fowlers is to be found in *Heads and Headlines:the Phrenological Fowlers,* University of Oklahoma Press, 1971, and she has edited *A Phrenological Dictionary of Nineteenth Century Americans* (Westport Conn. :Greenwood Press, 1982), which provides a selection of reproductions of the phrenological portraits from the pages of the *American Phrenological Journal.* The introduction to the latter provides a useful consideration of the appeal of phrenology.
[23] Sterne, *Phrenological Dictionary* Introduction, x.
[24] Ibid., ix.
[25] Both Ibid.,xviii. The citation is from *The American Phrenological Journal* (May 1849), p.103.
[26] John D. Davies, *Phrenology, Fad or Science: A Nineteenth Century American Crusade* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1955).
[27] Ibid., p.172.
[28] Ibid., p.172
[29] Ibid., p.166
[30] Ibid., p.171- 172.
[31] Ibid., p.165.
[32] Ibid., p.170. The citation is from Ralph Waldo Emerson, *Complete Works*, 12 Vols., (Boston: Riverside Edition, 1897-1900), 10. p.318.
[33] Davies, *Phrenology,* p.169.
[34] Ibid., p.108. The citation is from George Combe, *The Life and Correspondence of Andrew Combe* (Philadelphia, 1850), pp. 302-303.
[35] *American Phrenological Journal*, Vol. 12 (1850) Editorial Remarks, p. 209.
[36] Dalton Lisle, *Phrenology and Religion in Antebellum America and Whitman's "Leaves of Grass,"* in *Mickle Street Review*, no. 15, pp 1-34.
[37] Ibid., pp. 3; 27.
[38] As acknowledged in his note 3, p.30, these are Edward Hungerford, "Walt Whitman and his Chart of Bumps", *American Literature* 2 (1931):350-384; Madeleine Sterne as cited previously; Harold Aspiz, *Walt Whitman and the Body Beautiful* (Urbana:University of Illinois Press, 1980) and Walt

Whitman:An Encyclopedia, eds J. R.Lemaster and Donald D. Kummings (New York: Garland Publishing Inc.,1998) s.v."Phrenology" by Arthur Wrobel.
[39] Ibid., p.8.
[40] Dalton p.18. The key comment is "Although Fowler could rationalise the acquisitive age as necessary to a larger process, his dislike of its excesses was unequivocal."
[41] "Existing Evils and Their Remedies", *American Phrenological Journal* Vol. 1V (6), p.150.
[42] Ibid., Vol. 4 (9), p.282.
[43] Ibid., Vol. 4 (Jan. 42) p.23.
[44] Dalton, p.4.
[45] Ibid. The Emerson citation is as previously acknowledged.
[46] Ibid., p.4.
[47] Leaves of Grass 1856, p.209, l. 10.
[48] *American Phrenological Journal*, Vol. XIX, Jan. 1854, p.112.
[49] Roger Cooter, *Phrenology and the Organisation of Consent in Nineteenth Century Britain* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984).
[50] Cooter p.6
[51] Ibid,. p.7.
[52] Ibid., p.6.
[53] *American Phrenological Journal* Vol. VII (1845), p.2.
[54] Cooter, p.110.`
[55] Ibid., p.111.
[56] Ibid., pp.112-113.
[57] Ibid., p.116.
[58] Leaves of Grass 1856, p. 207.
[59] Cooter, p.118.
[60] Leaves of Grass 1856, p. 207. ll. 9-10.
[61] According to Cooter in terms of sales the American audience easily tops the British . By 1860, some 10,000 copies had been sold in Britain and some 200,000 more in America (where it passed through more than 20 editions).
[62] Cooter, p.121.
[63] Ibid., p.119.
[64] The reference in Cooter is to an 1806 evaluation of Gall's and Spurzheim's systems as "treasures of Knowledge." The full reference is such revelation of the constitution of humanity seemed like the discovery of a new world; such a key to the character and motives of beings by whom I was surrounded – a new Aladdin's lamp, which revealed treasures of knowledge more precious than gold. I immediately became possessed with the most insatiable curiosity to know of my own development and that of every body by whom I was surrounded" (Cooter. p.175).
[65] Cooter p.175 n.23 The Emerson observation is from *The Journals and Miscellaneous Notebooks of Ralph Waldo Emerson*, Vol. 5 (1835-38) ed. Merton M. Sealts (Cambridge, Mass.,1965), p.212
[66] Ibid p175.
[67] Leaves of Grass 1856, p. 210 ll. 1. 3.
[68] *American Phrenological Journal* Vol. 12 (1850), pp. 38-39.
[69] Cooter's note references this as, "Farewell Entertainment to Mr and Mrs Fowler, and presentation to Mrs Fowler," *Dundee Advertiser*, 4 Apr.,1863: p.390 n.23.
[70] Harold Aspiz, *So Long! Walt Whitman's Poetry of Death* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2004) p.103.
[71] Ibid., p103
[72] Ibid., p.104.
[73] Ibid., p.103.
[74] Ibid., p.103
[75] Leaves of Grass 1856 p. 207 l. 3.
[76] Bucke, ed., *Notes and Fragments*, 1, 28-29. Cited in Blodgett, p. 705
[77] Blodgett acknowledges the fragment constitutes, "an incomplete poem." (p. 705. n.)
[78] Blodgett, p. 704-705.
[79] Variorum, p.108, ll. 119-120.
[80] Ibid., p.215 l. 21.
[81] Leaves of Grass 1856, p. 228, ll. 4-6.
[82] Ibid., p.228, ll. 12-13.

[83] One is never sure how contrived such convolutions of syntax are. Is there, here, a suggestion of mocking the supposed learned thinkers by representing them as ignorant hillbillies, in mind terms, with 'learned' replacing 'taught'? Is the "themselves" transposed to this odd position to dramatise the desperate need not to follow others' advice?

[84] M. Jimmie Killingsworth, *Whitman's Poetry of the Body* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 1989), xvi.

[85] Ibid., xix.

CHAPTER SIX

Whitman views the limitations of Beecher's world: one of a man "several wheres manacled."

This chapter continues the analysis of Whitman's critique of advice - givers who aim to lecture to young people. It is proposed that Whitman fashioned his therapeutic poetic partly in response to Henry Ward Beecher as the popular example of male middle class advice-givers of his era. An examination of Beecher's phrenological portrait from *The American Phrenological Review* will demonstrate the poignant irony that the eulogized construction of the portrait yields a clear picture of Beecher as a mechanistic and moralistic dispenser of advice to his 'flock.' This can help to further explain Whitman's continual endeavors, in major poems, to persuade his readers to be autonomous and free-thinking. It is suggested that Whitman's search involves avoiding the 'manacles,' which constrain Beecher through developing in himself as poet, and by textual means in his readers an 'untrammeled spirit.'

Henry Ward Beecher was worthy of being considered the most famous preacher of reassurance of his or any generation. *Harper's Weekly* described his following thus: "Probably no man in the country is more generally known, or regarded with a more personal affection and enthusiasm -whenever and wherever he speaks, vast crowds assemble;"[1] and William J McLoughlin has described the components of his message of succour as follows: "the two persistent themes which emerge from all his sermons, essays, and lectures are the constant upward progress of life and the loving superintendence of God."[2]

Beecher's connections with Whitman are various and revealing. Traubel records a number of instances of the aged Whitman commenting on Beecher and the particular nature of his oratory. The focus of Whitman's appreciation, of his sometime envy, of his sometime anger, is the directness of Beecher's style of preaching and its ability to reach into the souls of his flock. A frisson of resentment lies just below the surface of the appreciation voiced here to Traubel by Whitman,

> I have every reason for believing he was a great absorber of Leaves of Grass -- that perhaps quite unconsciously he imbibed, accepted its spirit: molded many of its formulas into his own work. I think I met dozens of people in New York and Brookyln those days who said to me (it was of a Monday or Tuesday): "I heard Henry Ward Beecher last night (or night before) and his whole sermon was you, you, you from top to toe." I have always said to myself then: Well, this is a sign that we are growing.[3]

On another occasion when the matter being discussed is the importance of spontaneity in public speaking Whitman is effusive in his praise of Beecher. He praises him for aiming for and achieving 'contact,' for trusting to the moment in order to make this happen, for being able to 'feel the throb -- joy, sadness, expectancy -- of the people gathered together.' Beecher is seen as a man who can 'get soaked with the subject.' Whilst Whitman is aware that there is great 'care' behind this apparently unscripted spontaneity, it is the effect on the listeners that he envies – 'they like to be approached direct.'[4] This last comment suggests that in crafting that strand of his therapeutic which has as its key component a form of direct address, designed to heal a lack of mental self-esteem, Beecher will have been of interest.

However it is when discussing the oratorical opportunities on offer in Brooklyn and New York, ones not yet fully grasped, as he sees it, that Whitman makes his most

telling observation:

> Brooklyn -- New York --now offers the biggest field to the equal personality -- *the Beecher and more* -- the man who can grasp the situation -- who has the tongue of fire, the burning heart -- who *flows* out, not *reads* out: who fills any platform without notes -- who has a message for struggling humanity.

Whitman continues to weigh up what he feels is needed, indicating the nature of just what it is that has held back Beecher himself from seizing the opportunity that was on offer. Beecher had been:

> a great man... not *entirely* free, still somewhere or several wheres, manacled. But the new man must be free, must have an untrammelled spirit.[5]

Here in weighing up Beecher Whitman takes a longer perspective: one where Beecher has fallen short of what would be needed in order to connect fully with his audience, consequently leaving the task to be completed. The tropes Whitman uses are of interest. The representation of Beecher as in chains, 'manacled,' and, furthermore, being so in several respects, 'several wheres,' along with the call for an orator who, unlike Beecher, will have an 'untrammelled spirit,' all these suggest that Whitman sees Beecher, despite all his eloquence, as severely held back and restricted.

In the context of the present study's aim to evaluate Whitman's complex relationship to models of therapeutic discourse available to him in his culture there are a number of ways in which Whitman's critical observations can be examined and evaluated. An investigation of the direct oratorical flourishes of Beecher as recorded by one of his congregation[6] will assist in the task of pinning down any limitations within this

offering. It will also be important to contextualise Beecher as a major figure within a wide-ranging group of male middle-class dispensers of advice to young men and women. For this task, and to assist in demonstrating the restricted, indeed, repressive, nature of the advice, the work of Carrol Smith - Rosenberg is indispensable.[7] Finally, in terms of advice to the young, the most culturally resonant Beecher text, one which, in its many editions, spanned mid nineteenth century America, "Seven Lectures," will demand close study.[8]

However, before taking these paths, it will be necessary to examine the assessment made of Beecher in the pages of *The American Phrenological Journal,* in order to appreciate fully a very powerful irony, one Whitman would not have failed to relish. Fowler's carefully crafted phrenological eulogy can be shown to reveal, at one and the same time, the restrictive world of phrenology and the restrictions of Beecher himself and his brand of religious advice. It has been the intent of previous sections of this study to argue for an examination of the populist version of phrenology, most clearly articulated through the publications of Fowler and Wells. The claim is that this version is of importance to Whitman, both as a source of discourse patterns, and as a model of coercive instruction necessitating a critical response on Whitman's part.

One of the examples used to measure the strength of purpose with which Whitman went about establishing an alternative model of instruction and inspiration was the frontispiece to *Leaves of Grass*, 1855. It was claimed that one strand of the complex set of radically challenging messages that resonate from that image involves an invitation to relate to the representational figure in a manner which is diametrically

opposed to that involved when reading and interacting with the figures featuring in phrenological portraits in *The American Phrenological Journal*. Since, in May 1849, that journal contained a very extensive phrenological portrait of Henry Ward Beecher, [9] it is important to start an attempt to contextualise him and to identify what Whitman termed his "manacles" by examining this text.

The reading is fulsome in its praise of Beecher, describing him in the overblown final paragraph as one who 'will stand out as THE strong man of the age and for a quarter of a century he will be the master spirit of the age.'[10] In his build-up to such a climactic eulogy Fowler does not seek to provide a full cataloguing of each and every phrenological organ, instead he concentrates on selecting key organs for our attention and admiration, holding these within an overarching framework of four main strengths, which he claims typify Beecher's mental disposition. Close inspection of these strengths will reveal that the portrait can be read as the depiction of a particular type of exhortative advice-giver, indeed as a model of a certain type of advice dispensed by a class of mid-Victorian American males. The interest of the present study lies in demonstrating how divergent Whitman was in relation to this template.

Beecher's four strengths are not seen as being of equal intensity. The first in the portrait is the sheer vigour of his physical condition, but this is only seen as complementing the remaining strengths. In phrenological terms it is his Animal Energy which is described as exceptional, delivering vital force to his thoughts and feelings [via the mightiest lungs in America]. The second strength is a shade higher in intensity and is delineated by Fowler's tallying of a selected range of named

organs. Significantly the controlling organ, or as Fowler puts it, the 'king,' is Benevolence. Though this 'rules' it operates in conjunction with Adhesiveness, Amativeness and Philoprogenitiveness in a quartet of social affections. Fowler carefully delineates the core role of Benevolence:

> [It] sets his powerful intellect at work, to devise the best ways and means for obviating evils and securing good; stimulates all his other moral faculties[11]

And equal care is taken to ensure we clearly see the scope of the organ:

> In my examination of heads I have rarely, if ever, found it surpassed, or even equalled. It towers above every other organ in his head, and is the great phrenological centre of his brain.... It is really enormous and forms altogether the dominant motive of his life; and this constitutes the second great instrumentality of his success.[12]

The trope of regal control is also useful for Fowler to explain how Benevolence extends its rule over potentially negative organs. Through its own strength it restricts and controls Combativeness, Firmness, Secretiveness and Cautiousness. Fowler is at pains to paint a clear picture of a man working selflessly for others at all times, and does so in a manner captured in the following description which, in addition, manages to pointedly remind us of all those unBeecher-like ministers, who are in love with success:

> Let a minister preach for the sake of distinguishing himself, and he will utterly fail in attaining such distinction; but to attain it he must forget himself, dismiss all aspiring , ambitious ends, and throw his whole soul into the doctrines he would urge, and this devotion to his cause will secure him popularity and eminence.

His description of Beecher stands in sharp contrast to this portrait, with not a trace of

the intent of "distinguishing himself,"

> Beecher's dominant Benevolence constitutes the one ever-ruling motive of his life. He works for man as if he were working for his life. Every sentence he utters, every look of his eye, every gushing of his whole soul, bespeaks the dominance of that faculty. Consequently all his sympathies are with man and for man.[13]

The third strength consists of Beecher's forte of having a mental force driving him to do things "with all his might." This complements his massively strong vital energies and social affections and does so by being grounded, as Fowler presents it, in his social vocation as a preacher. The pen portrait of Beecher in full flow is a measured and powerful one:

> What he does, he does with all his might. He takes hold of great things as though they could and must be done. Every sentence is uttered with an energy which carries it home to the innermost souls of all who hear; yet his Combativeness is never expended in personal defence, or in opposing his enemies, but simply in pushing forward his benevolent operations.[14]

The fourth and last strength continues to provide for the reader a description of a more particular context in which the strengths are manifested. The constituent elements are the intellectual traits in Beecher which are necessary for the type of preacher he so famously was. The main organ of massive strength is Comparison which delivers wit: there is a massive Eventuality providing anecdotes and examples, and the organ of Language is not neglected by Fowler, nor are its companion organs, Imitation and Ideality.

In a telling sentence, Fowler manages to hammer home, through sheer repetition, his intended, idealized, picture of a preacher, armed with all these organs, and with

direct access to the minds of his listeners:

> No one can be at a loss to know exactly what he means, as he has the rare faculty of transferring the *full power of his thoughts and feelings into the minds* of his hearers and readers.[15]

Let us consider that phrase, "full power of his thoughts and feelings into the minds." The process described here relies on, and reinforces the model of Beecher outlined in the earlier part of the portrait. Beecher can transfer 'full power' due to his physical attributes. His intellectual organs ensure an appropriate content, shaped by him as a language craftsman. The feelings come from a man super endowed with organs of the social affections and the 'king' of these is his Benevolence. The transfer is made in one direction only, eschewing any need for observation of, or consideration of, the nature and needs of the recipients, by a man described by Fowler as 'true to (his) own instincts.' When Fowler describes the process as one where Beecher is "pushing forward his benevolent operations"[16] we surely see an ironic underestimation of the sheer intensity of the procedure that is represented in the portrait.

Beecher is, undoubtedly, being classified by the means of a mechanistic mental taxonomy which frames a simplistic description of his "powers." However, the most startling feature of the eulogy is the manner in which he is depicted as a veritable Benevolence machine, all his other organs straining to drive the benevolent feelings, expressed in axiom and anecdote, to his listeners. Those poor souls, his listeners and readers, have no other purpose than to be the target of his major organ.

Examining this portrait, refracted as it is through the prism of phrenology, reveals in what high esteem Fowler and his readership held a particular brand of autodidactic

moralistic advice when it was presented to them in sermons and advice books of the times. If we return to Whitman's pithy comment that there was a need to find a 'Beecher and more,' one who would have 'equal personality,' I would suggest that the latter phrase bears inspection in the light of the particular nature of the portrait just established. A portrait which ironically revealed a man 'manacled' within his own selfhood and chained to a role of perpetual delivery of advice to others.

Whilst Whitman wanted to reach into the minds and souls of his readership in a direct manner, his aim was to achieve this in a fashion diametrically opposed to Beecher's. His own comments reveal his awareness that in order to avoid being 'manacled' the poet-orator must strive for this 'equal personality.' By this Whitman implies a number of key features essential to the maintenance of a healthy relationship between poet and audience. The poet must conceive of his audience as his equal; the poet may instruct his audience to realise their potential, but must do so by demonstrating what he shares with them. This necessitates demonstrating his own weaknesses as well as strengths and empathising with the strengths and weaknesses of his audience. This is the Whitman of the early major poems, the poet who says:

> I am larger, better than I thought,
> I did not know I held so much goodness.
>
> All seems beautiful to me,
> I can repeat over to men and women. You have done such
> Good to me I would do the same to you,

This is the Whitman who sweeps beyond the "strata" of mental taxonomies thus,

> Having pried through the strata, analysed to a hair,
> Counseled with doctors and calculate
> I find no sweeter fat than sticks to my own bones

> In all people I see myself, none more and not one a barley-
> Corn less,
> And the good or bad I say of myself I say of them
> I know I am solid and sound.

This is the Whitman who announces the restoration of self-esteem,

> I chant the chant of dilation or pride
> We have had ducking and deprecating about enough,

but also a Whitman who insists this can only happen when due recognition is given to self doubt in poet and audience,

> I acknowledge the duplicates of myself, the weakest and
> Shallowest is deathless with me,
> What I do and say the same waits for
> Every thought that flounders in me the same flounders in
> them.[17]

This is a figure far removed, in spirit, from Beecher. Where Beecher is "manacled," Whitman is seeking for freedom for himself and his audience and building a relationship based around the acknowledgment of the possibility of thought processes being both crippling and liberating in all men and women.

To appreciate fully the distance between Whitman and Beecher it is important to deal directly with the sermons which so enthralled the latter's mid-century congregation in Brooklyn Heights. It is particularly interesting to do so via the diligent recordings of key points in his sermons, made at the time by one of his parishioners, which became quite a publishing sensation in their own right. In her preface Edna Dean Proctor describes the enterprise which she set dutifully about thus:

> To gather up and preserve some of the treasures thus lavishly scattered, has been the aim of this volume. It is not given to the world as the full-boughed tree; but only as some of the leaves which have fallen from it through two successive seasons.[18]

It is important to examine in some detail the Beecher 'leaves' in relation to that of another, more famous, dispenser of pages of text called "leaves." The book takes the form of a sequence of short examples of key moments from Beecher's sermons illustrating both his rhetorical tactics and the major themes that emerge, as he delivers his advice and therapeutic counsel to his parishioners.

When Beecher takes to the open air in his illustration we find the following:

> If you find a place between the throne of God and the dust to which man's body crumbles where the focal responsibilities of law do not weigh upon him, I will find a vacuum in nature. They press upon him from God out of eternity, and from the earth out of nature, and from every department of life, as constant and all--surrounding as the pressure of the air.[19]

The trope of the great outdoors is facilitating for Beecher an insistence on the omnipresence of law bearing down upon the individual; the result is that, from above and below, each individual is in a virtual straitjacket. The final detail is telling, the very composition of the air itself is represented as a reminder of law or moral duty pressing in on the individual from all directions.

The opening of 'Song of the Open Road' is an invitation to an open-air lesson in how to achieve happiness in the soul, but considered alongside Beecher's vision, there is also revealed a feeling of freedom:

> Afoot and light-hearted I take to the open road,
> Healthy, free, the world before me,[20]

Whitman is announcing his quest to 'conceive heroic deeds in the open air,' while Beecher is reminding his flock of the almost suffocating presence of law in their lives. Beecher also deploys an example of Whitman's most celebrated trope, that of grass:

> Do not be troubled because you have not great virtues. God made a million spears of grass where he made one tree. The earth is fringed and carpeted, not with forests, but with grasses. Only have enough of little virtues and common fidelities, and you need not mourn because you are neither a hero nor a saint.[21]

In his 'benevolence' Beecher is preaching the acceptance of mediocrity and of resignation to having a lack of potential: the trope of grass being spread throughout the physical world assists his listeners in accepting their restricted roles. By contrast, the briefest of examinations of Whitman's deployment of the trope in "Song of Myself" confirms Rudolf Schmidt's observation that Whitman:

> Dwells upon (grass) everywhere with peculiar fondness as nature's Democracy -- it being, as it were, the first child of the vegetable kingdom -- the symbol of the new spiritual life which the poet knows is to proceed from himself.[22]

In three sections of 'Song of Myself' Whitman suggests the grass stands for the core of the created world,

> I believe a leaf of grass is no less than
> The journey-work of the stars,

that it surrounds us with a healing physical presence, similar to that provided by his poetic,

> This is the grass that grows wherever the

Land is and the water is.
This is the common air that bathes the globe,

that it sums up an optimistic attitude to all things and all people,

I guess it must be the flag of my disposition out
Of hopeful green stuff woven.[23]

Whitman's deployment of the trope is clearly devoted to the purpose of signalling the presence of an inspirational positive force in the physical world, in his poetic, and potentially in all his readers. He has succeeded in his task by breathing life into Beecher's stultifying trope.

Near the end of 'Song of Myself' Whitman finally discloses what is both at the core of his poem and of the health-giving lesson he offers. I have argued that this point in the poem is central to Whitman's endeavor to teach his blinkered audience how to think, healthily, about themselves:

There is that in me --I do not know what it is - but I know it
Is in me .....
Perhaps I might tell more .....
Do you see oh my brothers and sisters?
It is not chaos or death -- it is form, union, plan -- it is eternal
Life -- it is Happiness.[24]

By contrast, when Beecher addresses the issue of happiness, he does so only to dismiss it through foregrounding an insistence on labour and toil as the means of attaining a minimal version of happiness:

We are not sent into life as a butterfly is sent into summer, gorgeously hovering over the flowers, as if the interior spirits of the rainbow had come down to greet these kisses of the season upon the ground; but to labour for

> the world's advancement, and to mould our characters into God's likeness, and so, through toil and achievement to gain happiness.[25]

A final example is available of just how far Beecher is from being the "untrammelled spirit" Whitman called for, or being capable of promoting such in his audience. This involves a depiction of female contentment which stands in stark contrast to Whitman's. In the case of Beecher there are two vignettes. The first features women working with a needle:

> I pity those women whose staff is their needle; for when they lean upon it, it pierces, not their side, but their heart. The devil's broadsword, in this world, has often been the needle with which a woman sews to earn her daily bread. I think the needle has slain more than the sword of war.[26]

The second is one of a mother watching her baby:

> A babe is a mother's anchor. She cannot swing far from her moorings. *And yet a true mother never lives so little in the present* [Emphasis added] Her thoughts follow the imagined future of her child. That babe is the boldest of pilots, and guides her fearless down through scenes of the coming years. The old ark never made such voyage as the cradle daily makes.[27]

What is striking here is that Beecher denies the women any right to be alive in the present, either in the space which many occupied as seamstresses, usually exploited, and often 'sweated,' or in their role as mothers. He counsels a contentment that demands they do not work and that they devote all their thoughts to their child's future. To deny them a social role and limit their maternal feelings to forward projection of their child's future is to 'manacle' them.

The picture of women sewing which Whitman presents near the end of 'Song of Myself' is very different:

The young mother and old mother comprehend me,
The girl and the wife rest the needle a moment and forget
Where they are,
They and all would resume what I have told them.[28]

These women are subsumed into the wide groupings of those addressed in the poem, but what is important is that these women return to their social roles. A quiet insistence that they do so after instruction by the poet is conveyed in 'resume what I have told them.' Here Whitman is sending the women back into their imagined social roles, after he has instructed them concerning how to attain happiness by raising their self-esteem, by learning from him how to value their humanity and by realising that thinking positively about oneself, whilst 'preachers' instruct otherwise, is a first step.

If it was important to Whitman to imagine, and to hope to bring into being, an "untrammeled" poet, who would sing to an audience of their potential freedoms, it was also equally important to avoid being "trammeled". Webster's 1828 Dictionary has the following two definitions of the noun "trammel."

Trammel,n.

1. A kind of long net for catching birds or fishes.
2. A kind of shackles used for regulating the motions of a horse, and making him amble.

And one for the accompanying verb to "trammel":

Trammel,v.t,

1. To catch; to intercept.
2. To confine ; to hamper; to shackle.

The world that emerges through these examples is of nature's creatures captured, restricted in physical motion and shackled. Beecher is a model for Whitman in his attempt to find a direct route to his listeners but he is a creature manacled and

trammelled in the senses revealed in Webster. His phrenological portrait reveals a preacher restricted and trapped within a myopic intention of delivering benevolent instruction to his flock. His 'life thoughts,' as mediated by a devout and faithful parishioner, present a restricted world where anxiety concerning doing duty and the need to anticipate the future prevent any celebration of the social present one inhabits or, indeed, of one's individual potential. Nature itself is 'captured,'or 'trammeled' and confined till it becomes an emblem of the constant reminder of the need to be aware of and to obey laws.

It is important to consider Whitman's construction of his own version of therapeutic advice-giving in opposition to the model provided by Beecher. However, eminent as Beecher was in his own time, his writings offering advice to a range of his contemporaries were only a part of a vast outpouring of advice literature to young and old in mid-century America. In the work of Carroll Smith-Rosenberg we find an analysis of this cultural phenomenon, paying particular attention to those authors who focused on young men in Jacksonian times. The keynote of her analysis is control - the need to impose control, in terms of both sexual behaviour and wider social practices, in a particularly frightening and rapidly changing social situation, one in which young men are considered by their compatriots as key, vulnerable, figures in a social flux.

In the chapter entitled "Davie Crockett as Trickster" she proposes that the young men of the 1840s and 185's are offered in Crockett a figure who:

> Negates simultaneously the male reformers' visions of the dutiful son and of the loving patriarchal father. He is loose, liminal, and wild.[29]

She is also at pains to insist this mythic cultural, offering is irredeemably comic - "But at all times we must remember that this is only a joke, a tall tale, Southwestern humor."[30] More significantly, she sees what is on offer as unhealthy in the sense that the freedom and wildness is naturalised within the myth in a form which only channels frustration concerning change into unacceptable channels:

> What emerges from the Crockett myth as natural, timeless, and inescapable, is not capitalism and the bourgeoisie but young male violence -- violence directed toward women but more overtly towards the inhabitants of the wilderness –toward Indians, Mexicans, and escaped slaves.[31]

This, however, is not the key 'play,' as she terms it, within the culture of the time. Despite the strength and persistence of the Crockett myth it is only a muted response to the other play or script which she focuses on. This play is extremely relevant to the present study's concerns. It is that of the benevolent middle-class male:

> Gradually, however, one voice began to dominate the discourse as it came to dominate the social structure - the voice of the bourgeois male. In the end it is his voice we most remember.[32]

It is useful to follow through Smith- Rosenberg's careful delineation of the reformers and of their targeted young men. Firstly, the young men:

> In one play a frail and endangered male adolescent emerged as the problematic figure[33] With puberty, powerful sexual urges tempted him to masturbate, engage in illicit sexual encounters, and marry early. These urges violated a rigid system of physiological laws based on a hierarchy of bodily proprieties and a closed energy system. Energy devoted to the lower, sexual organs robbed the higher organs -- brain, heart, nervous system -- of vital blood and energy. If the young man ate meat, rich sauces, or other food associated with the new commercial centers -- his lower organs and instincts would become uncontrollable, destroying the body's hierarchical order, and lead to an irreversible progression of diseases culminating in death.

The figure emerging is only safe when contained within a rigid system of laws. Here physiological laws are cited, but equally rigid laws of the mind were available. As has been shown, within popular phrenology, as deployed both by Fowler and Beecher, was a "play" to offer direction on just how to think and control the self. Consequently there was a vital, self-appointed, role for the male reformers of the

time to play in relation to these young men, one which saw them replacing the family the young men had left and the father-figure, artisanal employer, now becoming a relative rarity as the cities were transformed. As Smith-Rosenberg points out, what had been available before in life on the farm or through an apprenticeship was presented in idealized terms:

> Fortunately, this dangerous and endangered young man lived within a rural patriarchal family of fathers and grandfathers, or as an apprentice within the home of a patriarchal master. These older men, assisted by a shadowy cast of virtuous and sexual mothers and daughters, would guide the young man past the maelstroms of sexual desire into a safe maturity of self-control and devotion to family.[34]

As she further clearly outlines, the publications of the reformers was a culturally significant attempt to offer themselves up as surrogate providers of wisdom and advice:

> The authors of this play were a group of self-styled male moral reformers, gathering under their banner such diverse enthusiasms as food and health reform, temperance, educational reform, and phrenology. While we have traditionally seen these groups as the lunatic fringe of Jacksonian America, it is important to remember that on an operational level they were fully accepted and functioned within the bourgeois urban world.[35]

It is one of the strengths of Smith-Rosenberg's analysis that she carefully explains what she means by 'functioned within the bourgeois world.' The methodology is made clear. At the widest level, pronouncements in advice books about the family and sexual morality use, like other manifestations of reform ideas, a form of cultural response to times when control was problematic:

> Sexuality and the family, because of their primitive psychic and social functions, serve as reservoirs of physical imagery through which individuals seek to express and rationalise their experience of social change.[36][Emphasis

Added]

One has only to think of Whitman's call to the young of both sexes to abandon their conventional families and travel a more open road, with him as a comrade, to realise that this 'reservoir' of imagery was full of contradictory constituents. If, as she claims, in order to 'establish the legitimacy of its new economic hegemony, the bourgeoisie proclaimed that its own class characteristics were the dictates of God, nature, and human reason,' then the corollary veneration of cleanliness, temperance and frugality did not go unchallenged. Whitman's famous outburst, 'the scent of these arm-pits an aroma finer than prayer,"[37] is typical of Whitman's challenging stance.

At the level of individual reform groups, and their aims and practices, Smith-Rosenberg provides in *Sex as Symbol* a clear indication that the advocacy of benevolent advice and the new practices put in place were unhelpful to anyone seeking effective and lasting release from a social system experienced as restricting: 'Voluntary association and reform groups advocated social control and uniformity within a millennial ideal. They contained seeds of a future conformity.'[38]

But skilful as the analysis is, there is a price to pay for a scholarly emphasis on detecting the 'obsession with absolute control" which "runs through the moral reform pronouncements.'[39] By focusing on the denial of the pleasures of the body in particular, the risk is that the actual full complexity of the bourgeois urban world is lost. Those aspects of that world reflected in the reform writings, consisting of millennial promise, both in material and spiritual terms, may be overlooked It is important, therefore, that recognition is given to those elements of the reformist

message which have a vision which aspires to a harmonious future, to an integrated individual, healed physically and, most significantly, in and through his mind. It is that visionary part which, presumably, attracted Whitman, and may have counterbalanced other elements he was opposed to.

William McLoughlin paints a very clear picture of Beecher as a reformer of the type Smith-Rosenberg examines. He does so, very helpfully, in terms of Beecher's congregation, and through a study of Beecher's ability to offer sustained and powerful relief to the social and political anxieties of his flock. These are the same anxieties examined by Smith-Rosenberg, namely the concerns centering on the rapid transformation of Jacksonian America into an early capitalist society with a concomitant fluidity of social roles and a problematic new emphasis on materialism. McLoughlin pays full attention to what he claims are the two main themes that Beecher came to preach, 'the constant upward progress of life,' and 'the loving superintendence of God.'[40] Indeed he classifies Beecher's particular brand of liberal Protestantism as a 'theology of reassurance,' and classifies Beecher himself as a prototype 'popular psychologist ministering to the neurotic anxieties of a troubled society.'[41]

McLoughlin's most important insight concerning Beecher, however, is that in order to continue providing succour to his flocks, first in Cincinatti and then in Brooklyn Heights, he modified his message to assist his congregations adjust to their anxiety - dominated worlds. In doing so he moved from a Unitarian viewpoint, rebelling against but still imbued with Calvinist imagery,[42] through to an evangelical crusade championing the self-reliant individual. McLoughlin correctly identifies the latter

position as prefacing the stance of later apostles such as Norman Vincent Peale who arose out of the New Thought and Mind Cure movements.

In succeeding in achieving this feat of symbiosis, of absorbing his flock and being absorbed by them, within his role of preacher, lecturer and visionary, Beecher would seem to have attained a powerful and interesting position In many senses this can be seen as the position Whitman craved - he made no bones about it and appears triumphantly to foretell just such a role for himself in the closing section of the Preface to *Leaves of Grass (1855),* "The proof of a poet is that his country absorbs him as affectionately as he has absorbed it."[43] However, if we return to the import of Whitman's comments to Traubel on Beecher, cited earlier, the matter is a little more complex. Whitman's comments may indeed carry a tinge of envy which has as its origin his awareness that Beecher has achieved a role he had envisioned for himself. But Beecher does so at a great price, and Whitman's comment that he, Beecher, is 'manacled' is an accurate and devastating one, fully measuring the price paid. Beecher, as has been suggested, is accurately eulogised by Fowler as a benevolence machine impervious to his targeted audience; he takes his place, as Smith-Rosenberg shows, in the company of a group of male reformists intent on instilling an ideology of self- control of mind and body in the consciousness of contemporaries who are deeply anxious concerning the implications of social change.

Finally, there is one more way in which, for Whitman, Beecher is deeply significant as a model of imprisonment to be avoided. He was the foremost man of the hour in espousing a self-sufficiency for the individual which has come to be known as that of

the self made man, and which is often centered on material prosperity In sustaining a discourse of spiritual fulfilment linked to material success, attainable through intervention and assistance from a father figure, he prefigures one combination of spiritual and mental well-being which will emerge in America post Civil War.
In rejecting the restrictions involved in Beecher's stance as therapeutic pastor to their shared contemporaries, Whitman has already begun to stake a position of critical importance to his own attempt to sustain a therapeutic role. In sustaining a poetic of humane engagement with the reader in the master-classes which form a major strand in the major poems of 1855 and 1856, a poetic designed to assist the reader to think independently, he is set for battle against Beecher and other Benevolence 'machines.' That engagement will be difficult in the context of an America which is becoming filled with voices espousing material self sufficiency and promising mental techniques to help the individual achieve that narrow goal.

It is easy to caricature Beecher and he was a victim of a great deal of satiric attack in his day, but he is a complex figure. If in "Who Wills" Whitman can be seen, in a somewhat desperately condensed manner, to be mapping mental therapeutics within his culture, duly giving credence to at least three strands; that of spiritual fulfillment, that of raising of self-esteem through independent thought and that of conscientious application to attain material success, then Beecher does **not** sit easily in any one strand, but engages with elements of all. As we move on to consider the trajectory of Whitman's therapeutic as it developed in 1860 and beyond, Beecher plays an important role. Whitman has, yet again, sharpened his critical faculties on rigid prescription, on Beecher's 'manacles' But other strands of mental therapeutics are 'lurking' within the succour Beecher so effectively provided. Because, like

Whitman, Beecher was a cultural 'sponge' those strands will demand attention when Whitman's therapeutic role within *Leaves of Grass* (1860) is examined.

Near the end of Beecher's first lecture on "Idleness" in his best-selling advice book for young men there is a plea which rings out in praise of "the advantages of industry":

> Of all things on earth, next to his God, a broken man should cling to a courageous Industry, ... it will save him. ... a hearty Industry promotes happiness.[44]"

Beecher is reassuring his young readers that they need not drift into the dreaded state of idleness since focusing the power of the mind on industry is a salvation. It needs the rigorous examination of the advice manuals and reading practices of young clerks aspiring to social mobility undertaken by Thomas Augst and Judith Hilkey[45] to document fully the paradox that informs Beecher's advice. They see the advice offered to young clerks in the Gilded Age as consisting of manuals advising the reader to eschew idleness in favour of reading and including instances of writing which promote the development of "character." They aim to offer young men flawed means of 'self-making,' self instruction of a type where, in Whitman's disapproving terms they are 'tramelled,' since beneath the advice on cultivating individual potential lies an invitation to them to accept their passive fate in a rapidly changing bureaucratic system.

[1] *Harper's Weekly*, II (July 1858) cited in Clifford E. Clarke Jr., "The Changing Nature of Protestantism in Mid Nineteenth –Century America", *Journal of American History*, Vol. 37 Issue 4 (March, 71), p.599.
[2] William G. McCloughlin, *The Meaning of Henry Ward Beecher* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1970), p.244.
[3] Traubel, Vol. 3, pp. .456-457.
[4] All Traubel Vol.8, p. 400
[5] Both: Gertrude Traubel and William White eds., *With Walt Whitman in Camden* (Carbondale and Edwardsville: Southern Illinois University Press), 6. p. 345.
[6] The source is *Life Thoughts; Gathered from the Extemporaneous Discourses of Henry Ward Beecher by One of His Congregation* (Boston, Phillips, Sampson and Company, 1859).
[7] Carrol Smith-Rosenberg, *Disorderly Conduct; Visions of Gender in Victorian America* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press,1986) and "Sex as Symbol in Victorian Purity: An Ethnohistorical Analysis of Jacksonian America," *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 84, Supplement: Turning points; Historical & Sociological Essays on the Family (1978), pp. 5212-5247.
[8] *Lectures to Young Men on Various Important Subjects* by Henry Ward Beecher (Salem: Published by John P. Jewett & Co. Cincinnati ,1846).
[9] Madeleine B. Sterne, *A Phrenological Dictionary of Nineteenth –Century Americans* (Westport. Conn. : Greenwood Press, 1982), pp. 189-193.
[10] Ibid., p.193.
[11] Ibid., p.191.
[12] Ibid., p.190.
[13] Both, pp. 190-191.
[14] Ibid., p.193. The reappearance, here, of Combativeness is of interest. Fowler previously claimed the negative side of this attribute was safely under the control of Beecher's Benevolence. Now he also wishes to claim it plays an active part in Beecher's life and lifestyle. It is worthy of note that he ever so carefully describes it as utterly altruistic in its deployment. On the level of the methodology of phrenology this is a clear example of one of the confusions that pertain. It is never clear just how strong an organ measurement has to be to be beneficial, since all organ strengths interact, so any organ can be weak in strength as "controlled" by another while, also strong in itself.
[15] Sterne, p.193.
[16] Ibid., p.190.
[17] All Variorum I: p. 229, ll. 60-64; p. 25, ll. 399-402; p. 27, ll. 428-429; p. 67, ll. 1080-1082.
[18] *Life Thoughts*, iv.
[19] Ibid., p.57.
[20] Variorum, I p. 225, ll. 1-2.
[21] Ibid., p.132.
[22] Cited in Edward Haviland Miller, *Walt Whitman's Song of Myself: A Mosaic of Interpretations* (Iowa City: Iowa Press. 1991), p.50; original in Rudolf Schmidt, "Walt Whitman, The poet of American Democracy" in Traubel, Bucke and Harned, pp. 231-248.
[23] Ibid., Variorum I, p.41 l. 663; p. 22 ll. 359-360; p.6, ll. 100-101
[24] Ibid., p. 81, ll. 1309-1318.
[25] Life Thoughts, p.175.
[26] Ibid., pp. 93-94.
[27] Ibid. p. 122
[28] Variorum, I p. 81 ll. 1266-1268.
[29] *Disorderly Conduct*, p.95.
[30] Ibid., p.102.
[31] Ibid., p.108.
[32] Ibid., p.91.
[33] In her endnote Smith-Rosenberg claims the following as key figures addressing these young men: "Sylvester Graham, William Alcott, and O. S. Fowler were probably the most widely read and influential of the male moral reformers." *Disorderly Conduct,* p.316 n. 4.
[34] Ibid., p.92.
[35] Ibid., p.93.
[36] Ibid.,p.90.
[37] Variorum, I p. 33 l. 525.
[38] *Sex as Symbol,* p.218.

[39] Ibid., p.239.
[40]McLoughlin, *The Meaning,* p.244.
[41] Ibid., p.258.
[42] Of interest is the constant use of the trope of life as a severe and extremely perilous journey by sea with drowning the constant threat.
[43] Blodgett, p. 729.
[44] Henry Ward Beecher, *Lectures to Young Men on Various Important Subjects* (Salem, Cincinnati, 1846), pp. 23, 47.
[45] Thomas Augst, *The Clerk's Tale: Young Men and Moral Life in Nineteenth Century America* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2003) and Judith Hilkey, *Character is Capital: Success Manuals and Manhood in Gilded Age America* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1997). Hilkey's powerful observation on the utility of the 'technologies of self' on offer is that they provide "the spectacle of triumphant mediocrity." (pp. 130-131)

CHAPTER SEVEN

"Song of Joys" – On the Road to Reconciliation

This chapter will focus on a post 1857 notebook entry to consider the position Whitman took in the 1860 Leaves of Grass with respect to articulating the need for his contemporaries to challenge the didactic and moralistic advice- giving prevalent in the culture of the time which has been a key issue in the present study. It will be argued that Whitman is beginning to refashion the decisive and impassioned response he adopted to popularised phrenology and to Weaver and Beecher. Some measure of this modulation, it will be argued, is accessible by examining two selected poems from 1860.

In the case of "To a Pupil" it is suggested that this hitherto neglected short poem bears examination as it is divergent from previous "inscription" poems in terms of the role of "teacher," and in terms of the nature of the self promised through instruction. The maintenance of the poem in Leaves of Grass from 1860 is claimed as significant. In addition the significance of Whitman's refashioned position is tracked through a careful analysis of a major poem from 1860, "Poem of Joys."

It is argued that this poem can be viewed as more complex and conflicted than has hitherto been recognised. It is suggested that the complexity revolves around a tension between a celebration of joyous freedom and a clear attempt on Whitman's part to provide a model of magnetic personality to his readership. It is suggested that the latter bears resemblance to the advice-givers Whitman had consistently opposed.

A case is made that the final third of "Poem of Joys" clearly crystallize this complexity and, moreover, that subsequent revisions, additions, and re-allocations of elements within that section of the poem yield an insight as to Whitman's "reconciliation" to a point of view divergent from that outlined in the poems of 1855 and 1856. It is argued that this point of view is in tune with self-help manuals and success manuals of the late 1850's, 1860's and 1870's. The consequences of one strand of the poem consisting of a reconciliation to the changing nature of American capitalism are examined.

In an epilogue some measure is taken of how Whitman's therapeutic purposes post Civil War are revealed in *Democratic Vistas*. It is acknowledged that the discourse of this work does not conform to that of direct master class as in earlier texts. However, through a study of two key sections of the work it is suggested that certain key elements and themes from spiritualised mind-cure works can be identified and this is a significant further shift on Whitman's part toward a spiritualised therapeutic on a trajectory close to "New Thought"

There is in a notebook dated by Grier as "1857 or later," a short passage, entitled "The Idea of Reconciliation", where Whitman works through some notions that were obviously concerning him in relation to personality. He is considering the complex dynamics whereby a well-constructed person, by possessing "personality" is empowered, thus also making a marked impression on those around:

> The idea of personality, that which belongs to each person as himself, or herself and that you may so heighten your personality by temperance, by a clean and powerful physique, by chastity, by elevating the mind through lofty discussions, and lofty meditations and themes, and by self-esteem and divine love, that you can hardly go into a room or along a street but an atmosphere

of command and fascination shall exhale out of you upon all you meet.

In his editorial commentary Grier[1] is somewhat perplexed by what he perceives as a mismatch between the topic involved and the title Whitman settled upon. Presumably he is taken aback by the affirmative tallying of components of the self, physical, mental and spiritual, coupled with the eulogising of some kind of charismatic glow, all sitting under a title which includes the word "reconciliation."

As is the case with many of the entries in the early notebooks this entry feeds almost directly into a later poem. By examining this poem as benefiting from the notebook entry, it will be possible to suggest that what is being witnessed is indeed an act of reconciliation. It will also be possible to explore the relation between the stance advocated in this poem and the conflicted dynamics of "Song of Joys." One aspect of that dynamic, it will be suggested, is to help the reader accommodate to and reconcile him or herself to selfhood more controlled and calculated and less vibrant than Whitman had previously delineated: a selfhood that shares key elements with the advice books of the time. The poem in point is "To a Pupil":

Is reform needed? is it through you?
The greater the reforms needed, the greater the Personality you
Need to accomplish it.

You! Do you not see how it would serve to have eyes, blood complexion, clean and sweet?
Do you not see how it would serve to have such a body and soul
That when you enter the crowd an atmosphere of desire and
Command enters with you and everyone is impressed with
Your Personality?

O the magnet! The flesh over and over!
Go dear friend, if need be give up all else, and commence today
To inure yourself to pluck, reality, self-esteem, definiteness
elevatedness,

Rest not till you rivet and pluck yourself of your own Personality.[2]

The poem is one of the "Messenger Leaves" of *Leaves of Grass* 1860, and as Blodgett and Bradley[3] note, it emerges from manuscript with no variations, to remain virtually unchanged in all the editions. If we examine carefully the stance taken by the speaker, the retreat into exhortative celebration, the emphasis on iron control programmed to deliver a self "guaranteed" to make a stunning impression on the social scene, then we can begin to glimpse a Whitman who borrows key elements from advice givers around him.

The title itself is of interest in that rather than addressing a young man or woman or a comrade, Whitman adopts the role of a teacher or advisor with the recipient clearly in the role of learner. He or she may become a "dear friend" as the lesson unfolds but the pedagogic dye is cast. The first verse wastes no time, the matters being addressed are obviously urgent ones and reform, it is claimed, is a necessity. Even as he launches a challenge the speaker is using wordplay as part of the instruction in order to keep the listener on their toes. Reform in the sense of social reform and the radical transformation of social structures is being acknowledged, but the speaker insists, through the wordplay, that such social transformation must have as a precursor the re-forming, the making over of the individual. You need to construct "Personality" to make progress.

Verse two harangues the pupil, 'you,' and covers an area of the self familiar to readers of Whitman's previous poems, with the insistence on the unified and, presumably healthy, body and soul; but there is a new element here. It is the insistence on instruction rather than on the sharing of insights. Where, before, Whitman took pains to share parts of himself intimately, including feelings and

emotions, in order to engage with these same aspects of the self within his comrades, here the rush is on to cajole with rhetorical questioning and to speed on to the actual social interpersonal benefits of the re-formed self - "when you enter the crowd an atmosphere of desire and command enters with you."

If we examine this "atmosphere" some interesting points emerge. "Desire" could exist in the people you are meeting or within you but plainly as with "command" we only fully understand the specifics, the social dynamics of this situation when our instructor gives the summative and joyous outcome - "every one is impressed." What is then revealed is clear: so impressive are you that they desire you and you command their attention.

The kernel of the poem is the first line of the final verse. The self that is being paraded for instructive purposes becomes an apostrophised "magnet." The allusion is clearly to what is commonly called a "magnetic" personality, one able to draw peoples' attention.[4] If one thinks back to *Song of Myself*, where this study has argued instructive therapeutic counsel was being offered, one recalls that such counsel involved an awareness that the self needed to look inward to find self- love in order to reconfigure a social scene which often denied this "kelson" of creation its due place. Only then, it was suggested, might a new "me myself" emerge. What is being so strenuously pursued here is of a different, arguably more facile order. It is the reduction of the self to a magnetic device capable of demanding the attention of others.

This key line also plays its part in preparing the pupil for his or her mission once the

instruction has been made clear. It is the purpose of the last two lines to launch the pupil on a daily regime to embed this new personality and the swooning tone of the teacher in "Oh the Magnet" assists this end. The mission is then spelt out in some detail and the terms used and the trope found in the last line deserve scrutiny.

The first clear signal to the new follower is that the effort to concentrate on developing magnetism is total - "if need be" is surely deliberately ironic. Then the keynote of the approach to be taken is found in the command to "inure yourself." The term inure is a key one for Whitman and links this poem to other key texts.[5] For the moment it is useful to consider its use at the climax of "To a Pupil" in the light of the definition contained in Webster 1828:

> **Inure,** v.t.
> 1. to habituate; to accustom; to apply or expose in use or practice till use gives little or no pain or inconvenience, or makes little impression. Thus a man inures his body to labour and toil, till he sustains that which would destroy a body unaccustomed to it. So we inure ourselves to cold or heat. Warriors are inured to blood, seamen are inured to hardships and deprivations.[6]

It is apparent from this just what Webster and his contemporaries expected from an individual in a situation where there is a need to be inured – it is the demand that he or she steel themselves stoically to pain in order to perform a social role. This is a conception on which Whitman, as teacher, is drawing, in "To a Pupil" .

There is, in addition, a second entry in Webster's dictionary for this key term:

> 2. to pass in use; to take or have effect; to be applied; to serve to the use or benefit of .....[7]

This yields the modern equivalent "to come into operation or take effect." If we

allow the possibility that both meanings of "inure" are at play in the final lines of the poem, then the mission on which the pupil is sent forth, can be paraphrased as follows:

> The self you construct will be of extreme utility to you as through use you will find it effective and well embedded. However to reach this stage involves the pain of stoically exposing yourself to the practices involved.

If we allow both meanings of 'inure' to play their full part, what is effectively a monologue to an imagined pupil begins to take a fuller shape as a painful lesson where what is gained is at a cost to the self. If it was the case that the emerging undertone of painful compliance (and here the tone of compliance to utility struck in "serve" is crucial) was sustained in the final line this would establish the full significance of the pain involved. And, significantly, it can be shown that the last line does bear such an interpretation.

The most curious word in the last line's buoyant exhortation is "rivet." The entry in Webster is:

Rivet, v.t.

1. To fasten with a rivet or with rivets; as, to rivet two
2. pieces of iron.
3. To clinch; as, to rivet a pin or bolt.
4. To fasten firmly; to make firm, strong or immovable; *as, to rivet friendship or affect*

[Emphasis Added]

It is the third definition, where the range of referent extends into the domain of interpersonal social relationships, that is immediately relevant to the poem. Since this is a transitive verb the implication of the line – "Rest not till you rivet and pluck

yourself of your own Personality" - is that the self under tutelage can be fastened firmly by an act on yourself. Be affectionate to yourself and consequently self-publish a new personality.

This is a line of appeal to Americans which many mind-cure and self-help books through to present times do echo [8]; indeed it is perfectly possible to "translate" the last line into a modern self-help tome with the title – *Publish Yourself* – or *The Rivetting Self.* The point is not a flippant one – it is very important that in this short blueprint poem Whitman is revealing a position he is pulled toward, one where stoical self-control through concentration on loving oneself is claimed to translate into a new shimmering magnetic self ready to go on display. The self is being guided towards reconciliation to a role that impresses a magnetic self on the social field and its actors rather than one which engages with, takes issue with and transforms that scene. As such the position occupied is precisely that which Donald Meyer identified and critiqued in early mind-cure texts.

One way to measure the significance of the changes this involves in Whitman's construction of a therapeutic is to compare what is being celebrated within this "lesson" poem to key passages in earlier poems. We have moved a long way from a section near the end of "Song of Myself" which reads:

> I have said that the soul is not more than the body,
> And I have said that the body is not more than the soul,
> And nothing, not God, is greater to one than one's-self is,
> And whoever walks a furlong without sympathy walks to his
> own funeral, dressed in a shroud,
> And I or you pocketless of a dime may purchase the pick of the
> earth,
> And to glance with an eye or show a bean in its pod confounds

learning of all times,

And there is no trade or employment but the young man
following it may become a hero,
And there is no object so soft but it makes a hub for the
wheeled universe,
And any man or woman shall stand cool and supercilious
before a million universes.[9]

Here, by contrast, the empowered self is driven by "sympathy" and the empowered young man is thus guided back into his world of work armed with a new vision of his heroic potential. Lastly there is an engagement with and critique of others' knowledge which enables a cool "confounding" to take place, in marked contrast to the frenzied exhibitionism of "O the magnet." "To a Pupil" is one short poem from the 1860 edition and to more fully explicate the case that Whitman is beginning to construct a therapeutic which in some aspects is accommodating an inner-directed, controlled self, one which parallels other advice material around him, it is necessary to examine the major poem "A Song of Joys."

It is important to consider this poem in a number of ways. Firstly as a dynamic poem containing the tensions between the therapeutic voice of the earlier Whitman, cajoling the audience through respect and love of self and concern for others to become a fuller, happier, social being, and a voice more intent on guiding and advising a more timid self, in retreat from the social scene and desperate for easily - digested clues as to attainable "power." Then, again, it will be necessary to evaluate the significance of the considerable changes Whitman made in the composition of the poem in editions of *Leaves of Grass* after 1860, considering them in the light of the teacher – pupil relationship and the instruction in enhanced magnetic personality revealed as central in "To a Pupil." A key position in the 1860 poem is occupied by

a vision of transformative "personality:"

> Oh the joy of a manly self-hood!
> Personality – to be servile to none- to defer to none
> not to any tyrant, known or unknown,
> To walk with erect carriage, a step springy and
> elastic,
> To look with calm gaze, or with a flashing eye,
> To speak with a full and sonorous voice, out of a
> broad chest,
> To confront with your personality all the other per-
> sonalities of the earth,[10]

Here, in the penultimate stanza of the poem, we are looking , as in "To a Pupil," at a passage which borrows very heavily from an early notebook entry.[11] That source passage contains some of the key components of "manly self-hood": no deference to others, the assertion of self through a haughty carriage and resonant projection of the voice: in combination, effectively constructing a self as "personality" which can "confront" all others in the social sphere.

This 1854 '*Talbot Wilson*' notebook does indeed contain a section from which it appears these Whitman directives concerning the empowered self may have emerged:

> True noble expanding American character .... It is to be illimitably proud, independent, self-possessed generous and gentle ... Every American young man should carry himself with the finished and haughty bearing of the greatest ruler and proprietor ....Where is the being of which I am the inferior? ..I never yet knew how it felt to think I stood in the presence of my superior – If the presence of God were made visible immediately before me I could not abase myself ...[12]

In his notes Grier correctly traces the linkage between this entry and a key section in

"Song of Myself,"[13] – 'I have said that the soul is no more than the body / … a million universes,' where Whitman, in both the third and final lines of the verse paragraph, declaims the possibility of a self assurance which does resemble that in "Song of Joys":

Whilst those lines do echo the self assurance of the notebook entry and the "Song of Joys" passage, it is noticeable that the passage from "Song of Myself" is one placed in a position in that poem where Whitman is reprising the dramatic and didactic stances taken by his persona up to that point. One central stance taken, included in the reprise, is that of identification and, through the empathy that ensues, the build up of humane "sympathy." It follows, therefore, that in this section from "Song of Myself" a case is being made by Whitman through the considered juxtaposition of sympathy and self assertion, a strong case, for the need for both sympathy and assertion to be present in a well balanced self: the poem argues this and this section re-emphasizes the point – however self- possessed you are, without sympathy you are a dead man walking.

So whilst there may be a common source for the two passages in the respective poems there are interesting differences in the realizations of the issue of self-assertion emerging in the respective key sections of the poems. In the case of the "Song of Joy's" celebration of "self-hood," that self is restricted to looking out on and speaking out to the world in a manner which consists of the projected personality confronting other social beings: "to confront with your personality all the other personalities of the earth." The implications of the term "confront" are surely that the world of others is inherently in opposition to your self and that in the engagement

that is necessary for your survival you are armed and ready.

However, the initial impressions of the poem are deceptive. On first inspection, the opening of the poem lacks this sense of necessary confrontation, consisting as it does of the celebration of an "uncaged " spirit whose dynamic entry is into a world we recognize, making the poem a "jubilant" one:

> O to make a most jubilant poem!
> O full of music! Full of manhood, womanhood,
> infancy!
> O full of common employments! Full of grain and
> trees.
>
> O for the voice of animals! O for the swiftness and
> balance of fishes
> O for the dropping of rain-drops in a poem!
> O for the sunshine and motion of waves in a poem!
>
> O to be on the sea! The wind, the wide waters
> around;
> O to sail in a ship under full sail at sea.[14]

The markers provided are welcoming and reassuring: we are taken to the personal realm – "manhood, womanhood, infancy" – to the world of nature and animals and the elements, and, most interestingly, to the realm of "common employments."

Due to its range of referents this is a significant term for Whitman to use. Its primary meaning is obviously involvement in paid work but it can also refer to any activity in which one invests energy and purpose. How the examples provided by Whitman in the sequence of the poem shape up in relation to these two possible areas of reference reveals how the poem soon acquires levels of complexity in relation to the shape and nature of the "uncaged" self.

Immediately after the first four verses there is a run of four employment scenarios – locomotive driver, horseman and woman, fireman and fighter – each of which is of interest to Whitman as being characterized in its performance by power and speed and energy. This is employment but not in the confines of the city or office or factory or yard. After some verses celebrating general concepts such as "concord" in verse twelve Whitman signals a change of location – "O to go back to the place where I was born."

The details of this new location then emerge after two verses which were removed after 1871:

> O to have been brought up on bays, lagoons, creeks,
> or along the coast,
> O to continue and be employed there all my life!
> O the briny and damp smell – the shore – the salt
> weeds exposed at low water,
> The work of the fishermen – the work of the eel-fisher
> and clam-fisher.[15]

The importance to the speaker of this activity is felt in the wish to be so active "all my life" and this is amplified to an almost histrionic level in the first line of the next verse – "O it is I!"

However Whitman is not entering the paid employment of eel-fisher or clam- fisher as is evident from the celebratory detail of the next five verses – each verse a lengthy celebration of joining in a fishing party; first clam-digging then eel-spearing, then lobster fishing then "mackerel-taking." The precise nature of his attachment to these worlds of "work" is indicated by the picture he presents at the start of the first fishing

expedition: he joins the workers but,

> I laugh and work with them – I joke at my work,
> Like a mettlesome young man.[16]

Webster's 1828 Dictionary definition of "mettlesome" conveys precisely the sense of youthful, energetic, friskiness Whitman wishes to tap into, being "full of spirit, possessing constitutional ardor; fiery."[17] But this is not paid work and these trips change from accompanying workers to being one of a group of "tough boys" who form an intimate "brood."[18]

The kernel of the poem, the fulcrum around which the representations of "employment "and self- actualization turn is verse twenty-one:

> O something pernicious and dread!
> Something far away from a puny and pious life!
> Something unproved! Something in a trance!
> Something escaped from the anchorage, and driving free.[19]

Here the term which first captures the attention is "pernicious." Both the initial entry in Webster and the citations of the word in other entries give vital clues to the nature of the particular rebellious stance Whitman is taking at this point, and, in addition, clues as to what he was rebelling against.

The citation for pernicious reads thus:

> **PERNI'CIOUS**, a.
>
> 1. Destructive; having the quality of killing, destroying or injuring; very injurious or mischievous. Food, drink or air may be pernicious to life or health.

> 2. Destructive; tending to injure or destroy. Evil examples are pernicious to morals, Intemperance is a pernicious vice.[20]

Once again, as was argued was the case with Weaver and Beecher, we enter a world where the very physical fabric that surrounds us and the nutritional resources available to us are charged with menace. It is also significant that moral standards and presumably the upright personality of the fragile individual can be infected by "evil examples." There is menace in the social and instructional air we breathe.

The notion of pestilential advice, and the evil it can wield on the young weighs heavily in one of the linked word entries in Webster, in the third example for "Infect:"

> 3. To communicate bad qualities to; to corrupt; to taint by the communication of any thing noxious or pernicious. It is melancholy to see the young infected by vicious examples, or the minds of our citizens infected with errors.

In his contrary, unorthodox, use of "pernicious" in the poem Whitman signals his radical intent: finding a way to break free from such cultural claustrophobia, finding a way to navigate through such a dark social scene. Examination of the scenes suggests how this may be accomplished. Firstly, most of the activities he provides pen-portraits of are in an outdoors conceived as healthy and invigorating; secondly, as noted earlier, the activities consist of joining in with a youthful gang in exuberant activity. The "dread" nature of the activity adds to the subversive intent. It consists of enjoyable excitement, tinged with fear, a subversion of the way dread is portrayed in Webster, where it is a necessary, fearful, watchfulness in the presence of divine power and potential displeasure.[21]

In the next line of this key verse the wished-for mental space is defined negatively and spatially as a place and activity far away from "a puny and pious life" The contempt for such restriction is measured out in sibilance of the "p" sound. The desire to enter a space not prefigured, not regulated is caught in the term "unproved." The final line and a half suggest a mental journey away from a world of social regulation, and presumably, a world that is employment-filled, The emphasis is on freedom and the energy of mind and body which delivers such freedom.

It is apparent how well this verse works as a defining summary of the jubilant freedom Whitman is championing in the preceding sections. We have already seen the beautifully drawn scenarios of work and group activity which capture what is being glorified. In addition, "the joys of the soldier," and "the whaleman's joys," and "the farmer's joys," which follow, reaffirm this in the remainder of the poem.

Perhaps the most resonant term in the verse is "the anchorage" from which it is imperative to escape. A place of anchorage in nautical terms is a place of security, but one where the craft and sailors are static. This nautical aspect of the complex trope will re-appear and be refined at the climax of the poem and gain ever-increasing prominence in later printings as Whitman strains to suggest deliverance from a life of routine, one which is "puny" and "pious."

Early in the present study an analysis was undertaken to establish that, once the superstructure of revisions post 1855 were removed, "By Blue Ontario's Shore" could be revealed as a text carefully crafted, in part, from the 1855 Preface,

embodying an attempt by Whitman to cajole the reader into participating in a master-class on the potential of mind therapy. The opening of this present chapter set out to examine the almost submerged tension in a notebook entry between a depiction of assertive personality and an agreement that the self need reconcile itself to constraints within the social field. It has been suggested that in the first half of "Song of Joys" this tension is present and produces a lyrical but frenzied apotheosis of "mettlesome" activities, each involving a successful solution, one involving the reconciliation that only in such shared group pleasures can the world of employment be faced.

Appendix One cross references the verse paragraph structure of the original 1860 poem with the verse paragraph structures of later editions. This enables a contrastive analysis which seeks to identify how the changes made after 1860 reinforce such a reconciliation and align the intended impact on the reader with accommodations made by advice manuals targeted on the young men of the 60s and 70s, akin to the stance adopted in "To a Pupil." Such a move, it will be argued, is toward a mind therapy which, unlike that present in "Poem of Many in One" offers an emphasis on focusing thought on the presence of fear and death and, finally, on the need to dwell on life as a redemptive nautical journey toward spiritual fulfillment.

What then are the main structural changes at verse paragraph level which, after 1870, lead to a final verse paragraph where an athlete-sailor is replaced by a "ship itself"? How do we get to the position where we are confronted by "a swift and swelling ship," destined to "sail and sail and sail"? How, finally, can we face, not realized human representations, but just such a ship, taking its place as part of an abstract

nautical trope concerning life's journey?

The first change relates to the radical transformation of those verse paragraphs (37 to 40) in 1860 which establish a heightened climactic finale which then terminates in 41. The discussion earlier in this chapter offered a critique of the assertive agency of the personality and self-hood being undertaken in these paragraphs, particularly noting the self-defensive nature of an individual agency whose essence is so confrontational. However, by contrast, this verse paragraph also works along with those three verse paragraphs which precede it to build to a composite "life henceforth," celebrated in the final lines: a saunter through an assertively democratic landscape (37) leads to a sensualised harvest celebration full of "torrents" (38), closely followed by an evocation of the power of the orator to "quell America with a great tongue." (40).

M. Wynn Thomas has highlighted the importance of Whitman's use of "quell," at this point in the poem, to suggest the articulation of an angry feeling of unease at the kind of society Whitman saw emerging. Thomas also suggests that Whitman displaces the impulse to anger on to the separate person of the orator as "[he is] almost invincibly reluctant to admit the early poetry's debt to anger, preferring to conceal the depth of its critical impulse."[22] A study of the break-up and transformation of 37 to 40 offers confirmation of this insight – indeed the case can be made that the orator's inflated chest is intimately linked to the broad chest of he who has "a manly self-hood" and is about the business of confronting the world with "personality."

The changes made dissolve the impact of some key points, as instanced in one revision, when the parallelism offered in 39 and 40 is lost, as 39 and 40 are moved to F27 and F31. Equally the contribution of 37 and 38 is erased with their removal. In its later position at F27 the orator verse starts the first of two equally mitigated and diluted clusters of verses, F26 -30 and F31-38. The lead position in the latter is taken by the verse espousing "manly self-hood." F31 to 38 has within it a number of verse paragraphs which have been moved forward to nearer the end of the poem in order to shape the new climax. A verse on death, 30 becomes F35: a verse describing the joys of being "a ruler of life," moves to F34. As each of these makes a contribution to the new arrangement what can be glimpsed is a new, significantly different cluster emerging in F34-7.

This new emergent cluster, the product of so much careful manipulation by Whitman, bears the hallmarks of "To a Pupil," It contains a "something" which attracts magnetically, seen as integral to the empowered self; a heroism lauded which is redolent of stoical acceptance: "to meet enemies undaunted," so as to find out how much one can stand. The body is still of importance, but the changes in emphasis are significant. The body, which in the 1860 text, sought an "uncaged" immersion in social communal activity is now replaced by a body in flight from its shell and kissed by "the beautiful touch of death." The apotheosis at the end of the cluster, "to be indeed a god," offers joyous affirmation, but the immediate realization takes place on the scaffold, where one must inure oneself to fate even as you bravely face it.

The final verse paragraph(40) in 1860 is short and dramatic:

O to have my life henceforth my poem of joys!
To dance, clap hands, exult, shout, skip, leap, roll on,
float on,
An athlete – full of rich words – full of joys.

This is replaced post 60 by two final verse paragraphs, the first entirely new and the second containing modification of and addition to the above. The trope that is muscled into the climax is one of a nautical voyage with a heavy insistent tone emanating from the first and last lines of the new verse,

O to sail to sea in a ship!
To leave this steady unendurable land,
To leave this tiresome sameness of the streets, the sidewalks
and the houses,
To leave you O you solid motionless land, and entering a ship,
To sail and sail and sail![23]

In the modified final verse an additional line personifies the joy experience – "to be a sailor of the world" – before the last two lines close on absolute identification with the "ship itself," eulogized as "swift and swelling, full of rich words, full of joys."

There is a radical transformation taking place. The athletic prowess so jubilantly heralded in the fusillade of active physical verbs – "dance, clap hands" etc., is still present in the later editions but engulfed by a frantic nautical trope. As this unfolds, the self envisaged as straining to leave urban society – "tiresome sameness of the streets" – becomes momentarily a cosmic sailor, before enduring reduction to a "ship itself." It is almost as if Whitman wishes the vulnerable self to become a tough, durable, weather-beaten "thing."

We are on a journey, indeed, away from the "me myself" Whitman shared with the reader in "Song of Myself." If we pay close attention to the first lines of the respective final verse paragraphs, 'O to have my life henceforth my poem of joys,' and then, 'O to have life henceforth a poem of new joys,' we can recognize that, as with the other major poems studied so far, we are witnessing a therapeutic master-class. The clue is in the key word "henceforth." This obviously functions as a referrent to a continuously happy future, constructed as a series of joyous moments modeled on the poem. Equally however, it refers to the act of bringing these moments of joy into being within the poem and the liberating power of such enactment, shared enthusiastically with the reader, to help him or her begin to transform their life.

Whitman demonstrated excellent self- awareness in entitling the section of his notebook, referred to earlier, in which he begins to consider the power of a certain kind of personality, "The Idea of Reconciliation." The particular master-class, which is begun in the 1860 "Song of Joys," and which proceeds to unfold in the subsequent revision, is indeed an act of reconciliation. An echo of his former, more potent, self is still audible in his 1860 wish to find freedom and liberation from restraints imposed on the self, the desire to find a form of social "employment" for an energized self and the acknowledgement of the need to construct a vigorous self to present to the social field are all issues taken up within the poem. However if we examine what accompanies the spectacularly assertive promise in a key verse, "Oh while I live to be the ruler of life, not a slave," which is "no fumes, no ennui, no more complaints or scornful criticisms," the key to the reconciled self is laid bare. It consists in what is required to be denied. The Webster entry for "Fumes "contains

three citations which are relevant:

> 4.Rage;heat;as the fumes of passion.
> 5.Anything unsubstantial or fleeting.
> 6.Idle conceit; vain imagination.[24]

In "Oh while I live" the ruler/conqueror must renounce any passion, and never indulge in imagination, never admit the conception of any alternative possibility as this is insubstantial and idle. This is indeed an act of reconciliation. In the 1871 text, " Know'st though the joys of pensive thought?"[25] holds sway as one of the questions Whitman beguilingly asks of his readers, as the poem nears the end. The epithet, "pensive" neatly, but also tragically, fully indicates the circumscribed mental powers Whitman promises.

Epilogue.

There is ample evidence from major critics, and from Whitman himself, that one purpose of *Democratic Vistas*[26] is therapeutic. Whitman himself says in his preface:

> I think Literature – a new, superb, democratic literature – is to be the chief medicine and lever, and (with Art) the chief influence in modern civilisation.[27]

The opening paragraph of the opening page, dealing with the greatest lesson of nature, offers full praise to the model of "that perennial health-action of the air" which with its "ceaseless play and counterpart upon counterpart brings consistent restoration and vitality."[28]

Arthur Wrobel summarises the role of the poet in *Democratic Vistas* as that of "cultural diagnostician who looks below the surface of America's body politic to the 'inmost tissues, blood, vitality, morality, heart and brain".[29](quote is Warren, p. 79) He also sees Whitman as intent on delivering "a program for developing individualism, which he calls 'Personalism'.[30]

Harold Aspiz is in agreement with Wrobel in arguing that the key metaphor of the work is the body politic as a body available for healing. As he describes the process by which Whitman's poetic-political theory, which he sees as underlying *Democratic Vistas*, takes shape, he acknowledges the key role of self-reliance:

> Moreover, those 'idiocratic transfers'of the democratic idea, presumably operating through a spiritual intuition in each self-reliant individual who is attuned to an influx of nature's evolutionary law are the key elements ....

The result is a new, healed, order consisting of "transcendental and self-reliant individuals who would usher in the new democratic order."[31]

Astute as these interpretations are they do operate at an abstract level without reference to any linkeage to contemporary texts dealing with similar issues. I wish to suggest that such a connection can be traced. Previously Whitman was shown to be engaging in a complex manner with popularised phrenology, advice books, and success manuals. In the case of *Democratic Vistas* the link is with spiritualised mind-cure books.

One interesting clue as to this connection lies hidden in "chapter" headings Whitman

prepared for the re-release of *Democratic Vistas* in *Speciman Days and Collect,* but did not include on publication.[32] The appropriate headings for the two sections I wish to discuss are "Individuality, Identity, A Mystery, The Centre of All" and "The Element First Last, Indispensable." In their hyperbolic grandeur these are entirely consistent with chapter headings in the works of Wood, Trine, Evans and others.

Regarding the first section's contents, the key elements of mind-cure are all in place. Firstly, we glimpse a spiritualised self as a "compensating balance-wheel of the successful machine of aggregate America." Secondly there is a portrayal of spiritualised character formation available through "the advent of a sane and pervading religiousness". Thirdly, there is offered the consoling thought that just by contemplating a word (in the case of Wood and others this was reduced to the mere reading and re-reading of a word on the page) its unearthed potential could be released – "the word democracy- which still sleeps, quite unawakened." Fourthly, the transformative power of lonely thought is emphasised:

> In such devout hours... creeds conventions fall away and become of no account before this simple idea {the idea of your identity}.

Fifthly, there is evident a coinage of terms to bestow religious significance on the postulated new individuality, in Whitman's case, "precious idiocracy." And lastly, and perhaps of most significance, we are invited to celebrate the wilful celebration of elements within the self as triumphant which are, nevertheless, deficiencies:

> Provision for a little healthy rudeness, savage virtue, justification of what one has in one's self, whatever it is, is demanded. Negative qualities, even deficiencies, would be a relief[33]

Together these constitute a complex articulation of what is needed to strive for

health, through mental manipulation, in an "unhealthy" social situation. Beneath the contradictions and the bravado lies a key feature of spiritualised thought – the accommodation to an impoverished self in the face of dis-ease.

In the case of the second section, in the opening paragraph Whitman announces "the vertebration of the manly and womanly personalism of our western world, can only be, and is, indeed, to be (I hope) it's all pervading Religiousness." He then launches a visionary exposition of what shape this might take:

> Personalism fuses this{History}, and favours it. I should say, indeed, that only in the perfect uncontamination and solitariness of individuality may the spirituality of religion positively come forth at all. Only here and on such terms, the meditation, the devout ecstasy, the soaring flight. Only here, communion with the mysteries, the eternal problems, whence? whither? Alone, and identity, and the mood- and the emerges, and all statements, churches, sermons, melt away like vapors. Alone, and silent thought and awe, and aspiration – and then the interior consciousness, like a hitherto unseen inscription, in magic ink, beams out its wondrous lines to the sense. Bibles may convey, and priests expound, but it is exclusively for the noiseless operations of one's isolated Self, to enter the pure ether of veneration, reach the divine levels, and commune with the unutterable.[34]

Considered as a therapeutic this offers an interiority of ecstatic communion as an antidote to a world of "statements," and from within this self-cultivated loneliness the promise of thought which "beams" out. The problem is that the patient is left "venerating" a lonely self and communing with the spiritual clouds. This can be considered as reconciling the self to a degree of social impotence.

[1] Grier, Vol I, p. 399.

[2] Reader's Edition p 390- 391.

[3] Ibid., footnote pp. 390-391.

[4] The only study of this poem of which I am aware is David Haven Blake, *Walt Whitman and the Culture of American Celebrity* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2006), pp. 96-97. Blake's purpose is to establish Whitman projecting himself as a celebrity in the poem and inviting his readers to share in his "civic fantasy." The poem is seen as containing the "product and process" of production of celebrity, equivalent to "fifteen minutes of fame," which is seen as attainable. Blake does not situate the poem within the continuum of efforts by Whitman to offer therapy to others of a sustainable and socially meaningful kind.

[5] Whitman uses this term in a number of key poems: in "Song of Prudence" it involves the maintenance of thought and identity:

> All that is henceforth to be thought by you whoever you are, or by anyone,
> These inure, have inured, shall inure, to the identities from which they sprang,
> Or shall spring.
> (Var.II, p.246.)

This has as its source an exhilarating passage in the 1855 preface where the reader is assured that:

> ..and all that is well thought or done this day on any part of the surface of the globe ...
> ... - these singly and wholly inured at their time and inure now and will inure always to
> the Identities from which they sprung or shall spring ...(Blodgett, p.725, ll. 556-561).

In "Beginners" it is used to eulogise great innovators, "How they inure to themselves as much as to any – what a paradox appears their age," (Var.II, p.434.). In "Song of the Redwood Tree" it describes the stoical identity of the trees:

> Here laugh with storm or sun, here joy, here patiently inure,
> Here heed himself, unfold himself, (not others' formulas heed,) here fill his time.
> (Var.III, p.677.)

In "Not Youth Pertains to Me," by suggestion or indirection, Whitman's love of comrades is the constant:

> Not youth pertains to me.....
> ..... for learning inures not to me,
> Beauty, knowledge, inure not to me- yet there are two or three things inure to me ..
> (Var.II, p.528.)

Finally the opening two lines of *Myself and Mine* in the 1860 edition urged a form of wilful self-control: It is ended – I dally no more / After today I inure myself to run, leap, swim, wrestle, fight, (Var. II, p.322.).

[6] Christian Technologies, Webster's 1828 Dictionary

[7] Christian Technologies Webster's 1828 Dictionary

[8] The literature examining, and often seeking to expose, the worst extremes of "Self-help" literature is considerable. From an academic feminist standpoint, there is Michi McGee, *Make Over Culture in American Life* (Oxford,: Oxford University Press, 2005). From an interesting Folk-Lore Studies perspective, there is Sandra K. Dolby, *Self-Help Books: Why Americans Keep Reading Them* (Urbana & Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2005). An older polemic is Steve Starker, *Oracle at The Supermarket: The American Preoccupation With Self-Help Books* (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 1989). Finally, from the standpoint of polemic journalism, there is Steve Salerno, *SHAM Self-Help and Actualisation Movement: How the Gurus of the Self-Help Movement Make Us Helpless*, (London & Boston: Brearley Publishing, 2005). Each, from their own perspective, seeks to document the cultural prevalence of self-invention, whilst exposing the take-up of such therapies as addictive, as, ultimately, not offering self-empowerment or programmes for change, but rather, as Dolby neatly puts it, instructing the reader to " trust in the flow of the universe" (p.82).

[9] Variorum I pp. 78-79 ll. 1269- 1277.

[10] Leaves of Grass 1860 p. 268

[11] Grier Vol. I p. 56

[12] Ibid., p.56-7.

[13] The recurrent symbol of the proud stallion in "Song of Myself" has received a myriad of interpretations. Most frequently the approach has been to identify a mythical source and to read back into the poem the cultural resonance of the source. An alternative view might be to consider the haughty self-assurance of the beast as a transference to the animal world of human qualities which Whitman is championing.
[14] Leaves of Grass 1860 p. 259.
[15] Ibid., p.261
[16] Ibid., p.262
[17] Christian Technologies: Webster's 1828 Dictionary.
[18] Obviously the term "brood" implies that Whitman is imaginatively projecting his own leadership of this group of like- minded fishers. The other lines in verse 17 suggest a homoerotic bond to the group and the term "grown and half-grown" takes us further into a sexual projection
[19] Leaves of Grass 1860 p 263
[20] Christian Technologies: Webster's 1828 Dictionary
[21] The entry **DREAD** reads thus – 1. Great fear, or apprehension of evil or danger..... we speak of the dread of evil, the dread of suffering, the dread of divine displeasure. 2. Awe; fear united with respect.
[22] *Lunar Light,* pp. 6-7.
[23] Variorum Vol. II p.342
[24] Christian Technologies : Webster's 1828 Dictionary.
[25] Variorum II p.341 l. 127.
[26] *Democratic Vistas, And Other Papers. By Walt Whitman,*(London:Walter Scott Publishing, 1888).
[27] Ibid., Preface.
[28] Ibid., p 1.
[29] Arthur Wrobel, entry "Democratic Vistas (1871) " in *Walt Whitman. An Encyclopedia.* The citation is from James Perrin Warren, "Reconstructing Language in *Democratic Vistas*." *Walt Whitman: The Centennial Essays*. Ed. Ed Folsom (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1994), pp. 79-87.
[30] Ibid., p.177.
[31] Harold Aspiz, "The Body Politic in *Democratic Vistas*" in *Walt Whitman: The Centennial Essays* (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1994), pp. 113, 115.
[32] Details in Prose Works, 1892. ed. Floyd Stovall. 2 vols. (New York: New York University Press, 1963-4);" Subtitle(s) inserted in clipped pages of DV for printing of SDC but cancelled before printing."
[33] All *Democratic Vistas,* pp. 38-42.
[34] Ibid., p. 46-48.

CONCLUSION

The opening observation in the introduction to this thesis was that Whitman's engagement with mind-cure and mental science therapies of his times deserved a full treatment. The preceding chapters have attempted to carry out an investigation which fulfils that goal.

Whitman's commitment to engage in issues of the mind was established by a close analysis of two major poems from *Leaves of Grass* (1856). The structure of "Poem of Many, in One" revealed, on analysis, a re working of key elements of Preface (1855) to establish a format akin to that of a master-class in positive thinking. The analysis of "Poem of the Road" led to the claim that it also had an important theme, involving the importance of positive individual thought as a sustaining force in an individual's maintenance of self-esteem.

In addition the thesis identified the presence of a strong critique by Whitman of the nature of advice and admonition from proponents of popularised phrenology in relation to using the powers of the mind to improve oneself and gain "happiness" *The American Phrenological Journal* was examined to establish the ideology of repressive control which informed editorial discourse. The thesis argued that Whitman's engagement with the Journal's editor's "performance" as therapeutic counsellor, especially to young men, is more complex than has been recognised: Whitman borrowed some aspects of the direct address on matters concerning mental therapeutics, whilst also carving out a more

empathic and humane approach to those he addressed concerning how to think independently. In advancing this consideration of a complex relationship the thesis sought to extend work by Paul Zweig, and to establish that recent work by David Reynolds, on Whitman's borrowing of phrenological font features, ignores Whitman's continuous critique of Fowler and of phrenology's authoritarian tendencies. A thorough review of the cultural position of phrenology was undertaken to establish that Fowler and Wells' particular brand of phrenology was not aberrant, but shared with mainstream phrenology, those key elements which Whitman so objected to: a desire to classify, an emphasis on dictatorial and moralistic instruction, a compulsion for order and discipline.

Whitman was also seen to oppose the manner in which Fowler and other advisers on mental well-being advised on "happiness" and used, for edifying instruction, an extension of a phrenological head reading of the great and the good. It was proposed that his critique informed both the intended therapeutic message of the frontispiece to *Leaves of Grass* (1855) and the structure of the poem itself.

As a study whose methodology is New Historicist there is, appropriately, considerable investigation within it of popular texts of Whitman's times: Weaver, Fowler, Beecher and the Brooklyn Heights tyro as mediated through a devout parishioner. However, every attempt has been made to ensure Whitman is not constructed as a passive borrower of populist ideas, keen to work on them and adapt them. Consequently, in a manner similar to that adopted by many previous scholars, the study has drawn on Whitman's notebooks as a source of his active, sometimes frenetic, working-through of ideas and issues, many

of which resurface in the poetry. The careful reader of the thesis will not have failed to notice the key passage that has informed my discussion, which is:

> These are the thoughts of all men in all ages and lands-
> They are not original with me-they are mine- they are yours just the same
> If these thoughts are not for all they are nothing.
> If they do not enclose everything they are nothing
> If they are not the ***school of all things*** physical, moral and ***mental,*** they are nothing
> Test of a poem/
> How far it can elevate, enlarge, purify, deepen, and ***make happy*** the attributes
> Of the body and ***soul*** of a man [Emphasis Added][1]

The drive to provide master-classes in thinking has its origin here, built on the notion that a poetic can deal with every reader's thoughts, seek to help him or her think about the deepest matters, and, when others fail the test of a poem you set yourself, your own master-classes will attempt to succeed, by providing instruction in bringing happiness to the soul. The critical engagement with others' mind therapies also has its origins here.

The study has a timeframe, 1855 through to 1860, with some speculation concerning developments related to the 1870s, which permits engagement with a key question in Whitman scholarship: is there a waning of poetic power after 1855 and 1856? Aligned to this question is another, referred to in my introduction as originating from M Jimmie Killingsworth: does Whitman adopt radical, alternative, notions of the mind's power, only to succumb in due course to the use of a more conservative discourse, an indicator of a loss of radicalism? Killingsworth argues this is the case in terms of Whitman's political representation of the body.

On this issue I have some tentative comments to make. A great deal hangs on my analysis of "Song of Joys" and "To a Pupil." Whilst by no means claiming that my study has established them as atypical of the entire 1860 *Leaves of Grass,* I do suggest my analysis of them in relation to developments in mind therapies, may yield the following observations. There does seem to be a radical Whitman present in "Song of Joys," still committed to encouraging and guiding his reader to be independent in thought, but as the poem moves beyond 1860, there emerges a deeply conflicted text, showing evidence of that part of mind therapy which promoted a pragmatic "magnetism," in uneasy alliance with an abstract spiritualism. I tentatively suggest there is, indeed, what Killingsworth calls a "trajectory of loss." I suggest, however, it is not clear-cut in time, and not traceable specifically to 1860 by contrast to 1856: the chapter where the two texts "Who Wills" and "Poem of You, Whoever You Are" are analysed side by side presents I hope, the complexity of Whitman's position. I tentatively suggest that what Whitman achieved was significant, the maintenance of a radical view on mind therapy even as populist phrenology and dutiful, character-building began to hold sway. It wasn't a monolithic, secure view, "Song of Joys," as it is reformed demonstrates that, but it was part of his thinking long after the first two editions of *Leaves of Grass*

Perhaps it is a function of being so close to Whitman for a number of years of study, but one's mind fills with his tropes. I do feel, however, that my use of "path" in the following observation is justified and merited. My conclusion, with a few exceptions, only refers to a few others as alongside me on the path of study of Whitman. I trust the body of the thesis, by contrast, tells a more accurate story of my debt to others. I am, however, aware

of one particular fellow traveller whose insights I have repeatedly attempted to assimilate and build upon, Harold Aspiz. His two major books, his articles on "Song of the Road," and *Democratic Vistas*, among many, have insisted on the importance of exploring Whitman, his poetic, his construct of a 'persona' and his major poems in the light of phrenology and what are loosely called pseudo-sciences. I believe his observations are just, shrewd, and illuminating. None more so than this observation:

> The 1856 edition of *Leaves of Grass* not only has the outward appearance of a Fowler and Wells self-help manual but it also reflects some of the firm's ideologies. The handsomely produced volume is the most popularistic edition of the poems. Some of its new poems picture the Whitman persona as a teacher-confessor who adopts the pose of a guru addressing a working-class crowd that is eager to take his hand and hear his reassurance that they, as self-reliant Americans, are eligible for physical and spiritual advancement.[2]

The final debt I owe Harold Aspiz is that this brilliant insight allows me to suggest a few minor ways in which I hope this study has extended this particular insight. The study suggests the ideologies of popular phrenology and other mind therapies are, indeed, 'reflected,' but they are also, unsparingly critiqued. The teacher-confessor figure is, indeed, present, and this study has explored the role of teacher and how it informs and directs the very form of some poems. The crowd he addresses can also be conceived as capable of being lured away, by the likes of Beecher, to mind-therapies, ones proffering spurious self-reliance, necessitating that they be taught by Whitman how to maintain an "untrammelled spirit."

Finally, every investigatory study should engage with the object of study even when that engagement is difficult and frustrating, demanding persistence. I have always been troubled, concerned, and, indeed, quite puzzled by one of Whitman's salvos as he departs the "scene," at the end of "Song of Myself," "But I shall be good health to you nevertheless."[3] It has, in part, been the purpose of this study to interrogate the "nevertheless." I suggest the matter is resolved when we become aware of Whitman's dogged insistence that he should construct a poetic to instruct us to think independently, in order to think well of ourselves, whilst being fully aware that this will not be easily achieved, since mind-cure therapies abound and are seductive. The "nevertheless" then combines two promises from a loving and concerned Whitman: he will persist in helping you think healthily, and, with his help, you will get to that goal, despite all obstacles.

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[1] Grier, Vol., I. pp. 79-80.
[2] Harold Aspiz, *So Long! Walt Whitman's Poetry of Death* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama, 2004), p. 103.
[3] Variorum, I p. 83 1 .1342.

APPENDIX ONE.

CONNECTIONS BETWEEN PARAGRAPHS IN THE 1855 PREFACE TO *LEAVES OF GRASS* AND "BY BLUE ONTARIO'S SHORE"

Key:

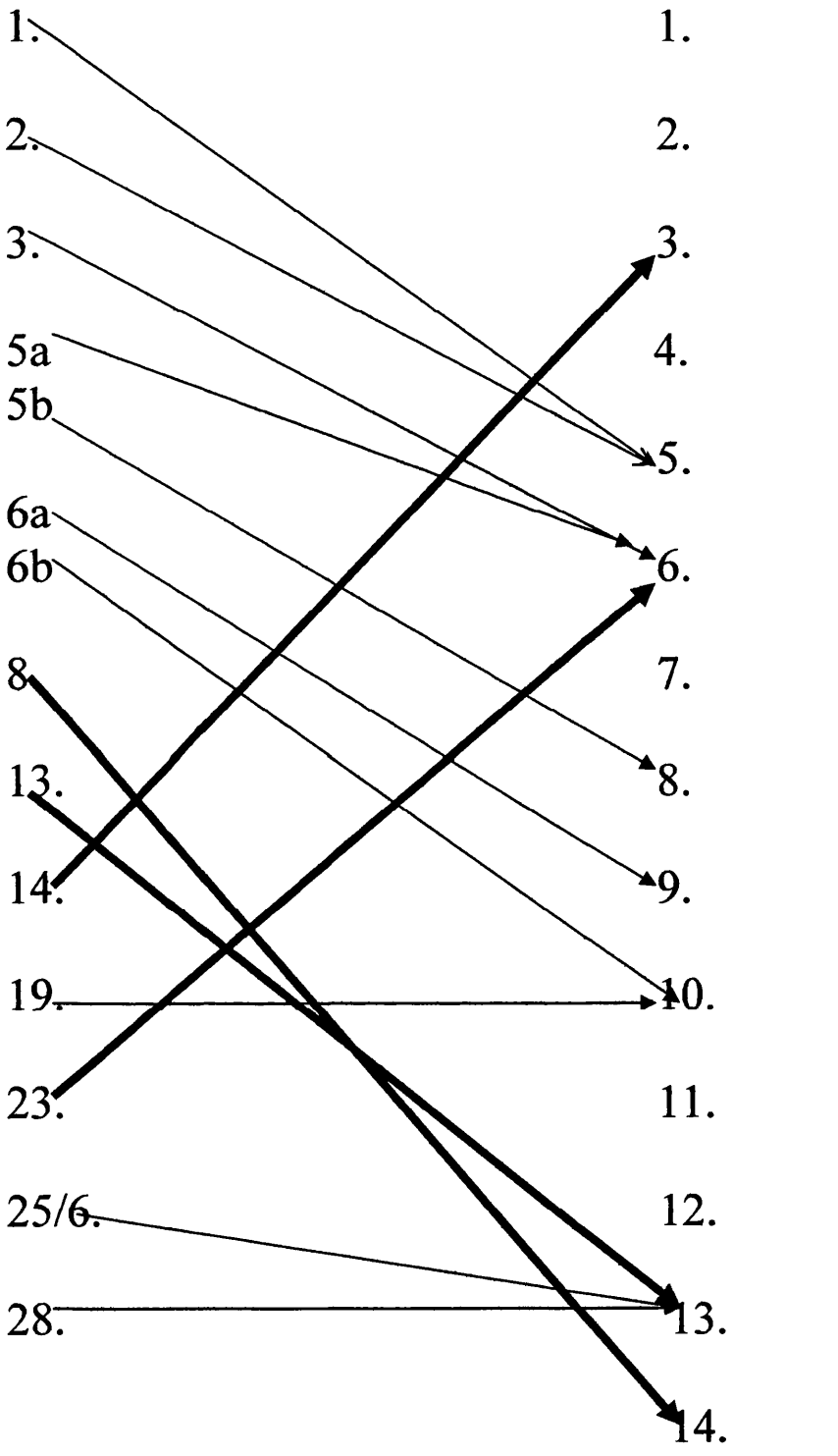
Thin lines: Direct Link with original Preface Sequence.

Thick Lines: Direct Link not in Sequence.

Notes

1. Verse numbers for "By Blue Ontario's Shore" from Sculley Bradley, Harold Blodgett, Arthur Golden, William White, eds., *Leaves of Grass, A Textual Variorum* (New York, New York University Press, 1980). Vol. 1.

2. Identification of links between Preface and poem draws on the material in the notes for "By Blue Ontario's Shore" in, Harold W Blodgett and Sculley Bradley, eds., *Leaves of Grass, Readers Edition* (London, University of London Press, 1965).


Preface Paragraphs.
Paragraphs in "By Blue Ontario's Shore"
1.
2.
3.
5a
5b
6a
6b
8
13.
14.
19.
23.
25/6.
28.
1.
2.
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14.
15 – 18.

APPENDIX TWO

SPENCER H. CONE, D.D.

SPENCER H. CONE, D.D.

HIS PHRENOLOGICAL CHARACTER AND BIOGRAPHY.

PHRENOLOGICAL CHARACTER.

The annexed likeness represents a strongly marked character. The motive and mental temperaments are developed in the highest degree, giving the desire to be constantly employed, and the ability to perform an immense amount of physical and mental labor. Persons having such organizations as Mr. Cone's, literally work themselves to death; and he must have been a very industrious man. The arterial portion of the vital temperament was prominent, but the digestive system was comparatively weak; so that the body was not amply nourished, the exhausting elements being stronger than those which supplied vitality.

The form of the brain was long, high, and narrow; so that the selfish faculties were only moderate, although the executive qualities were tiveness, acting in connection with the motive temperament, gave him unusual energy and force of character. Secretiveness was moderate—hence frankness and sincerity must have been distinguishing characteristics. Acquisitiveness was not a large organ, and he valued property only as a means to secure other ends. He could have transacted a great amount of financial business for others, still he did not love property for its own sake. Cautiousness was sufficiently developed to give prudence, but did not furnish restraint or conservative power; while the head being high, gave him an unconquerable Will, very great perseverance, and positiveness of character.

Some of the organs in the moral group were very large. He was not, however, so imaginative and fond of the marvellous, as sentimental, devotional, and philanthropic; for Benevolence and Veneration were larger than Spirituality and Ideality. Sympathy must have been a leading feature, and have exercised a controlling influence over the whole mind. He could have easily forgot his own necessities while administering to the wants of others.

Intellectually, he should have been remarkable for intuition and knowledge of men and things. He had a wonderful faculty to accumulate knowledge from experience and contact with the world. His conversation was pointed and personal, and his remarks were appropriate. Memory of association of ideas must have been remarkable, and he reasoned by analogy. Comparison was larger than Causality, giving a great ability to illustrate his ideas as he went along, and his thoughts were presented in a clear and definite manner.

Human Nature was the largest organ of the intellectual lobe. He understood the disposition of another as soon as he came in contact with him, and knew how to so adapt his language to the minds of those with whom he associated, as to gain the end desired.

Love of travelling is indicated by large Locality. Language appears to have been very subject. This faculty would enable him to express his thoughts by gesticulation as well as by the vocal organ. The cut represents large Order, giving the power to arrange and properly present his ideas.

It may not be uninteresting to state that the individual who dictated these remarks from the foregoing cut, was unacquainted with Mr. Cone's history, having never seen the man, nor heard anything in reference to his career; and the sketch which we append was not seen by him until it appeared in the JOURNAL.

BIOGRAPHY.

The readers of the newspaper press have already been made acquainted with the decease of the Rev. SPENCER H. CONE, D.D., pastor of the First Baptist Church, New York, which occurred in this city, August 28th, 1855. In presenting a short sketch of the life and labors of this distinguished man, we believe we are only echoing the universal public sentiment in regard to his genius, philanthropy, and high mental culture.

SPENCER H. CONE was born in Princeton, Somerset County, New Jersey, on the 20th of April, 1785. His father, Conant Cone, was descended from the first settlers of New England; and his mother, Alice, was second daughter of Colonel Joab Houghton, of New Jersey.

Through the energetic and persevering efforts of his pious mother, he was prepared for college at an early age. She acted under a strong and abiding assurance, impressed upon her mind when pouring out her soul in prayer for her infant charge, as he lay sleeping on her lap, that he would in due time be privileged to preach the glorious Gospel of the blessed God. At the age of twelve years he entered Princeton College. At fourteen, when he was prosecuting his studies in the junior class, domestic afflictions obliged him to leave college, and aid in the support of the family by teaching.

After assisting for three months in the Academy at Princeton, he took charge of a school at Springfield, Burlington County, in the same State, where he continued more than a year. By the invitation of Dr. Allison, he then assumed the duties of instruction in the Latin and Greek department of this Academy at Bordentown, to which place he removed his father's family; and the subsequent year he accepted an appointment in the Philadelphia Academy, under the supervision of Rev. Dr. Abercrombie, with whom he labored between four and five years.

To increase the means of sustaining his growing expenses, he left the school for the stage, where for seven years he realized an income of from fifteen hundred to twenty-five hundred dollars per annum. At the expiration of this period, he was so affected at seeing an inferior actor hissed off the stage, and reflecting upon the low and vile character of those who frequent the theatre, upon whose capricious applause the reputation of the most gifted depends, that he abandoned the profession in disgust, and took charge of the books and funds of the *Baltimore American*, a large printing establishment, devoted principally to politics.

SALLY WALLACE MORRELL, of Philadelphia. Mr. Cone subsequently received an appointment in the Treasury Department at Washington, from which office he was transferred to a holier sphere of duty, THE MINISTRY OF THE GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST. His conversion occurred during his residence in Baltimore, after leaving the *Baltimore American*.

Mr. Cone was ordained November 26, 1815, and a few weeks after was chosen Chaplain to Congress. In 1816, he became pastor of the Baptist Church in Alexandria, D. C., and in May, 1823, he removed to New York, and took charge of the Oliver Street Church, which office he occupied more than eighteen years. Under his ministrations, that body was largely increased in numbers and resources. Its celebrity for usefulness in all departments of benevolence was unparalleled in the history of the denomination. Several of the great enterprises of the day were originated there, and a large share of the success of others was attributable to the efforts and generous contributions of the Oliver Street Baptist Church.

On the 1st of July, 1841, by the unanimous vote of the First Baptist Church in the same city, he took the oversight of that flock, which, from peculiar circumstances in its history, had been greatly reduced in numbers and influence. It has since been raised to a degree of prosperity and usefulness enjoyed by few churches even in this favored land.

For a series of years he was annually elected Moderator of the Hudson River Association, and has occupied similar offices in the New York Association, and the New York State Convention. He was also for nine years President of the Baptist Triennial Convention. Previously to the formation of a more general body with the same object, he filled for many years the double office of Corresponding and Recording Secretary to the New York Baptist Domestic Mission Society.

With a brief interval, he had presided over the Board of the American Baptist Home Mission Society, since the organization of the Institution; and from the origin of the American and Foreign Bible Society he had been annually and unanimously elected its President, a post which he has occupied with the utmost devotedness and efficiency.

The great services which the Rev. Mr. Cone rendered to the Foreign Mission cause are universally acknowledged, but his history is most known and appreciated as identified with the American and Foreign Bible Society. He bore the brunt of the controversy in the Board of the American Bible Society, when the principle of pure translation was attacked, and the majority determined to support no foreign version which was not conformed to the *transfer* principle of the English. His motto from the first was,—"THE BIBLE TRANSLATED."

Mr. Cone's public speaking, and his influence in controlling large assemblies, were so remarkable, that any sketch of him which contained no allusion to the characteristics of his eloquence, and his ability as a presiding officer, may be regarded as essentially defective.

No one who heard him, had failed to notice the uncommon volume and sonorousness of his voice, and its astonishing flexibility and power of intonation. Its whisper could be heard throughout the largest auditory, and its loudest tones never shocked the ear of the listener. In the ready flow of appropriate language to express every conception of his active mind, we have never met his superior, and seldom found his equal.

His mind was eminently practical. He possessed a readiness of conception, united with a faculty of reasoning and deciding upon the spur of the moment, which, in the rapidity and accuracy of its decisions, resembled intuitive wisdom. Added to these, and not less essential to his success in the pulpit or the chair, was the profound confidence in the perfect sincerity of his heart, and the purity of his motives, with which he never failed to impress an audience.

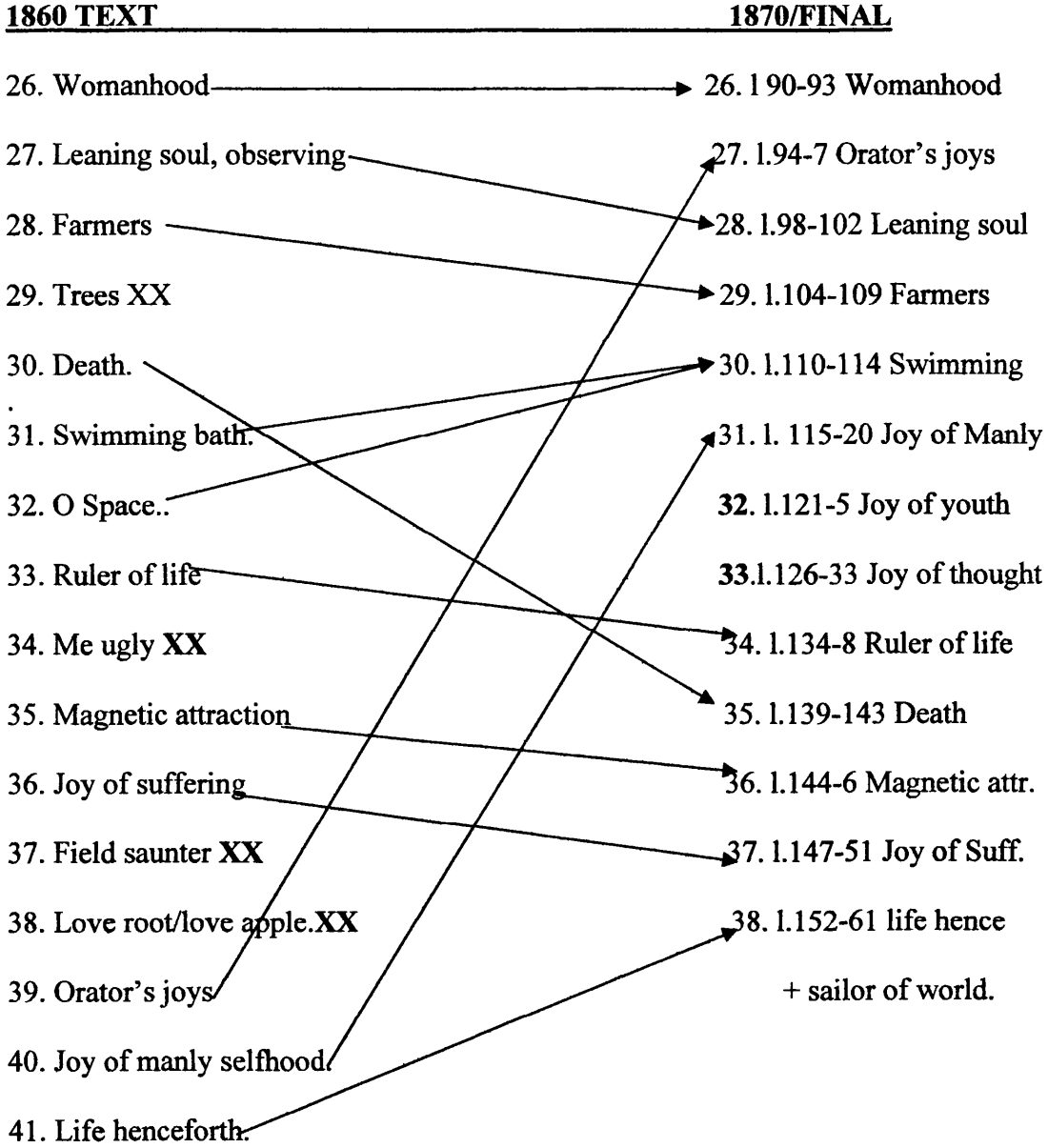
APPENDIX THREE

Song of Joys Verse paragraphs: Changes of position, additions and removals post 1860.

1. **The numbering of the 1860 text verse paragraphs is from – Major Authors on CD-Rom, Walt Whitman, Facsimile of Leaves of Grass, New York 1860 Research Publications, Inc., 1982.**

2. **Line referencing in the 1870 final text is from Variorum ll pp. 333 – 343.**

3. **Verse paragraph numbers have been allocated for purposes of contrast.**



KEY.

XX – subsequently removed.

32 33 added

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